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The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator profiles of Resident Assistants

Laura Ann Krouse
University of Tennessee - Knoxville

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Laura Ann Krouse entitled "The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator profiles of Resident Assistants." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in College Student Personnel.

E. Grady Bogue, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

Norma T. Mertz, Tricia McClam

Accepted for the Council:
Carolyn R. Hodges

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

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The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator profiles of Resident Assistants

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Science
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Laura Ann Krouse
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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to ascertain if there is a dominant Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) profile for Resident Assistants at three institutions of higher education in the southeast United States, and to determine if that personality profile differs based on demographic information. The MBTI is a forced-choice personality indicator that characterizes an individual as extroverted or introverted, sensing or intuitive, thinking or feeling, and judging or perceiving.

The MBTI was administered to 182 Resident Assistants at three institutions of higher education in the southeast. The indicators were scored and sorted based on type of institution (public or private), gender, race/ethnicity, and field of study. A chi-square analysis was done to determine if the frequency counts of MBTI profiles were statistically significant or merely coincidence.

This study found that Resident Assistants do not have one MBTI profile that is dominant. While the distribution of profiles is not even, it is not statistically significant. It was also found that there is no significant difference in MBTI profile distributions based on the Resident Assistant's race/ethnicity; however, significant differences existed based on type of institution, gender, and field of study.

Resident Assistants at private, religiously affiliated institutions prefer judging versus perceiving significantly more than Resident Assistants at public institutions. Similarly, male Resident Assistants are more likely than female Resident Assistants to

prefer perceiving to judging. Resident Assistants majoring in business or law/government are show preference for thinking in comparison to other fields of study.

A comparison between Resident Assistants and traditional age college students revealed that female Resident Assistants are significantly more intuitive than traditional age college females. Additionally, male Resident Assistants are significantly more feeling than traditional age college males. While all of these differences exist, there are no significant differences between the MBTI profiles of Resident Assistants and that of the general population.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Context

In 1921, a Swiss psychologist named Carl Gustav Jung published *Psychological Types,* in which he dared to explore human typology from a mindset other than that of Sigmund Freud. Although he was a devoted student of Freud, Jung disagreed with many of the foundations of Freudian psychology and felt the need to branch out on his own. According to Quenk (2000), "Jung's interest in types emerged from his observation of consistent differences among people that were not attributable to their psychopathology" (p. 2). The result of Jung's research was an important contribution to the field of human psychology, which paved the way for future researchers and allowed them to continue more in-depth studies of personality types.

Around the time Jung published his findings, a young American woman began her own independent search for the explanation of personality types and preferences. When *Psychological Types* was first published in America, Katharine Briggs embraced the work of Jung "with great enthusiasm, abandoned her own similar but less formed ideas and for the next 20 years worked with her daughter, Isabel Myers, to test the theory informally" (Bayne, 1997, p. 15). The outbreak of World War II led the women to take their research one step further, and they recognized the need to develop a personality type indicator. They observed that many individuals were working in positions not suited for their personality type and therefore were unhappy. They hoped that such a tool would help

people deal with the practical problems that arise during wartime such as allowing individuals to determine what type of job would be most appropriate for their personality (Lawrence, 1986).

The concept behind the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, also referred to as MBTI, is that of preferences. The women were not interested in determining how much of a certain personality characteristic a person possessed, but simply which characteristic the person preferred, or what appeared to be most dominant. The analogy often used to explain personality preference is that of handedness: a person is able to sign their name with the non-preferred hand, but it is awkward and uncomfortable. This is also the case with personality characteristics. The non-preferred function can be used, but it is used less often and does not come as naturally (Bayne, 1997).

After many years of informal testing, revisions, and skepticism, in 1962 Isabel Myers published the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator,* a manual describing the type indicator, how to administer and score it, the relationships among the personality variables, the theory that drove the indicator, and how to interpret it. According to this manual, the four personality dichotomies are the following: extraversion (E) or introversion (I), sensing (S) or intuition (N), thinking (T) or feeling (F), and judgment (J) or perception (P). The EI index**,** originally labeled by Jung, looks at a person's preference for focusing on the outer world (E) or the inner world (I). The SN index takes the external or internal world based on the previous dichotomy and determines if the focus of that world is on specific details

(S) or the bigger picture (N). It also explores a person's preference for perceiving information using the five senses (S) or adding a sixth sense to the process, intuition (N).

The TF index looks at a person's preference for using thinking (T) or feeling (F) when making decisions. One whose preference is for thinking will tend to base decisions on facts and logic, while one whose preference is for feeling will base decisions on people and what they need. Finally, the JP index was "designed to reflect whether the person relies primarily upon a judging process (T or F) or upon a perceptive process (S or N) in his dealings with the outer world" (Briggs, 1962, p. 2). The JP index also determines whether a person's satisfaction comes from the completion of a task, or the process by which the task is completed.

Over the years, a wealth of research has been done on the MBTI and its potential applications. It has been used to determine the personality profiles of prospective educators (Sears & Kennedy, 1997), the effect of personality type on team performance (Bradley & Hebert, 1997), and as a training tool for human services organizations (Aviles, 2001). The MBTI has also been used to determine the personality profiles of certain groups of individuals, for example: chess players (Kelly, 1985), civil engineers (Johnson & Singh, 1998), managers (Gardner & Martinko, 1996), and CPAs (Schloemer & Schloemer, 1997). Finally, the MBTI has been used as a student performance predictor in such courses as principles of economics (Borg & Shapiro, 1996), introductory accounting (Oswick & Barber, 1998), and first year law students (Randall, 1993). Even more commentary exists on the possibility of using the MBTI for personnel administration (Coe,

1992), teambuilding (Rideout & Richardson 1989), and leadership development (Young, 2001).

In addition to these and other research articles, in 1995, the Center for Applications of Psychological Type, Inc (CAPT) published the fourth edition of a book entitled *Atlas of Type Tables* (Macdaid, McCaulley, & Kainz, 1995). The CAPT was founded in 1975 by Isabel Briggs Myers and Dr. Mary McCaulley, and today it contains a research bank of over a million scored indicators. *The Atlas of Type Tables* contains personality profiles for subsets of the population including those working in and studying fields of art and communication, business and management, counseling and mental health, education, health, and religion. Additionally, this atlas provides normative samples for over forty groups of people, including data for the entire CAPT databank. Particular interest for this study lies in the normative samples of males and females who are traditional age college students.

Even with the wealth of research and commentary, the MBTI has not yet been applied to all areas in which it might be beneficial. One such area is that of student affairs, specifically residence life. The area of residence life is one that places a great emphasis on administration, teambuilding, and leadership development, three areas to which the MBTI is perceived to be highly applicable. It is important for residence life professionals to find out which, if any, personality profile is most attracted to the Resident Assistant position. It is possible that the Resident Assistant position is marketed poorly and is only attracting

one personality type. This would result in a lack of personality differences between staff members.

Also, since each personality profile is unique, it is important to have a balance within any group, including a staff of Resident Assistants, so as to maximize each person's individual strengths (Coleman, 2003). Similarly, Resident Assistants are responsible for a floor of residents, all of whom will not have the same personality type. It is important that the Resident Assistants in the building are an adequate representation of the spread of personality profiles of residents in that building. If all Resident Assistants are of a similar type, they will not be representative of the population in the building.

Another important factor in knowing the MBTI profiles of Resident Assistants is the ability to design staff training and development specific to that audience. Since Resident Assistants interact with fellow staff members on a continual basis, it is beneficial for them to learn each other's preferences as well as their own. This knowledge will allow them to rely on the strengths of their co-workers to assist them and vice versa. Coleman (2003) even suggests that supervisors create individual supervisory plans for each Resident Assistant so that they can "work with each staff member personally to develop those areas in which they may need work to work on so as to spotlight and take full advantage of their natural strengths and interests" (p. 14).

Statement of the Problem

Even with the abundance of research conducted using the MBTI, including personality profiles of several specific populations, there have been no studies of the

personality typology of Resident Assistants. Commentary, such as Jon Coleman's *RA Types* (2003), discusses the importance of knowing the MBTI profile of Resident Assistants, in order to determine how Resident Assistants prefer training to be structured and to develop an individual supervisory plan for each staff member. While he affirms the importance of using the MBTI when working with Resident Assistants, no data is currently available about the distribution of MBTI types for Resident Assistants. Without this information, it is impossible to determine if a certain personality type is attracted to the Resident Assistant position.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to ascertain if there is a dominant MBTI profile for Resident Assistants at three institutions of higher education in the southeast United States, and to determine if that personality profile differs based on demographic information.

Research Questions

The study will be guided by the following research questions:

1. What does the MBTI profile of Resident Assistants look like?
2. Is there a significant difference in MBTI profile based on demographic characteristics such as: type of institution (public versus private), gender, race, or field of study?
3. Is the MBTI profile of Resident Assistants significantly different than that of traditional aged college students?
4. Is the MBTI profile of Resident Assistants significantly different than that of the general population?

Significance of the Study

This study will add a new dimension to the existing research and commentary on applications of the MBTI. Completion of this study will provide residence life professionals with a personality profile of Resident Assistants, and will add empirical

evidence to either support or discredit current thoughts on the “typical" Resident Assistant. Coleman (2003) suggests that there is no one type better suited for a Resident Assistant; however, he provides no empirical evidence regarding the distribution of MBTI types of Resident Assistants. Once completed, the results of this study can also be submitted to the CAPT for inclusion in the next edition of the *Atlas of Type Tables*.

Definitions

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI): A forced-choice instrument, developed by Katharine Briggs and Isabel Myers, which is used to determine an individual’s personality preferences. The indicator uses four basic scales with opposite poles (extraversion or introversion, sensing or intuition, thinking or feeling, and judging or perceiving) to determine a person’s four-letter code, known as their personality type.

Preferred Function: The side of each of the four scales that is strongest based on the MBTI results. For example, if the MBTI indicates that a person’s personality profile is ESTJ, their preferred functions are extroversion, sensing, thinking, and judging.

Shadow Function: The MBTI identifies a person’s preferred function, either E/I, S/N, T/F, or J/P. A person’s shadow function is that opposite of their preferred function. For example, if an individual’s preferences were E, S, T, and J, their shadow functions would be I, N, F, and P.

Delimitations and Limitations

The primary delimitation of this study is the fact that only three institutions of higher education, all in the Southeast, were considered, which gives the study a narrow

scope. Similarly, only 182 Resident Assistants participated, which is an extremely small percentage of the total number of Resident Assistants in the nation. This means that the findings of this study are not applicable to all Resident Assistants; however, the study was not designed to be a national study.

Limitations include the fact that the MBTI is a self-report instrument; therefore while it is a reliable and valid instrument, the results of this study rely on honest responses from participants. If Resident Assistants are extremely familiar with the MBTI, or they did not respond truthfully, the results may be inaccurate.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The MBTI has attracted the attention of authors not only within the field of psychology, but in several other fields such as management, education, and medicine. This widespread interest has resulted in a wealth of research and commentary on the MBTI. Since the MBTI was created, research articles and commentary pieces have been published regarding the indicator itself, the meanings of each of the preferences, the indicator's development, and its applications. The chapter will touch on each of these subjects individually beginning with the four preferences scales and their distributions in society, followed by a discussion of the sixteen MBTI types, how the indicator was developed, and its applications in society.

The Preferences

Personality type theory is grounded in the belief that from birth, people have a preferred function and that function naturally develops over time (Coe, 1992; Briggs-Myers & McCaulley, 1985; Lynch, 1987; Briggs-Myers, 1980). The MBTI is based on the work of Jung who proposed that people were born with predispositions toward one end of each of the following four scales: Extraversion/Introversion, Sensing/Intuition, Thinking/Feeling, and Judging/Perceiving (Judging/Perceiving was not originally mentioned by Jung, but was later added by Myers and Briggs). These four separate continuums are "primarily concerned with the valuable differences in people that result from where they like to focus their attention, the way they like to focus their attention,

they way they like to take in information, the way they like to decide and the kind of lifestyle they adopt" (Briggs-Myers, I., 1987, p. 4). It is not meant to place judgments on any particular type, meaning that one type is not thought of as better than another type. According to Aviles (2001), " MBTI preferences are not good or bad and individuals may be required by situations to utilize all the preferences. However, conflict or dissatisfaction may occur if employees must continually utilize their least preferred or least developed functions" (p. 7).

The Extraversion/Introversion (EI) scale identifies how one interacts with the world, and how energy is received. For example, extroverts are energized by social interactions while introverts are energized by spending time alone, or with few people. The Sensing/Intuition (SN) scale identifies how one prefers to gather data. One who prefers sensing will focus on the information they are given, while one who prefers intuition will interpret the information they are given and add meaning to it. The Thinking/Feeling (TF) scale identifies how one prefers to make decisions. A thinker will consider facts and consistency while a feeler will consider people and their feelings. The Judging/Perceiving (JP) scale identifies how one prefers to orient his or her life. For example, those who prefer judging enjoy have things structured and decided while those who prefer perceiving enjoy a more flexible lifestyle.

In general, those with more of an extroverted orientation help open lines of communication, while introverts provide internal reflection of group discussions. Sensors bring up pertinent facts and "what is", while intuitors bring up new possibilities and "what

might be". Thinkers present logical analyses, while feelers offer insight into feelings. Judgers keep the team on schedule, while perceivers help consider alternatives (Bradley & Hebert, 1997).

In order to gain a broader understanding of each of the eight preferences, Kroeger & Thuesen (1992) provided the following descriptors of each type:

Extraversion versus Introversion

An extravert (E) will likely tend to talk first and think later, know a lot of people, and have a large circle of friends. An E will have the ability to read or converse while other activity is going on in the background, will welcome interruptions such as telephone calls or visitors, enjoys meetings and is easily able to express opinions. Also, Es would rather talk than listen; get bored when not participating in the conversation, and like to generate ideas in a group.

An introvert (I) tends to think through what to say before saying it, enjoys peace and quiet, and is easily disturbed. An I is generally thought of as a great listener, is occasionally referred to as "shy", and struggles with vocalizing ideas. In contrast to an E, an I likes to celebrate with only a few people, likes to be able to state thoughts or feelings uninterrupted, and needs to reenergize after meetings or group activities.

Sensing versus Intuition

A sensor (S) prefers specific answers rather than generalizations, concentrates on the moment and does not think about what is next, and likes to do tasks with a tangible result. A sensor does not try to fix things that aren't broken, would rather work with facts

and figures than ideas and theories, reads things in sequential order, gets annoyed when not given specific instructions, speaks literally and take things literally, and finds it easier to focus on an individual task than how that task fits into the larger picture.

Intuitors (N) think about several things at one time, are intrigued by the future and its possibilities, enjoy figuring out how things work just for its own sake, enjoy puns and word games, seek connections and relations between things, answer questions in generalizations and get irritated when asked for specifics.

Thinking versus Feeling

Thinkers (T) are likely to stay calm, cool, and objective in heated situations. Ts would rather settle an argument based on logic and fairness than what makes people happy, enjoy proving a point for the sake of clarity, are more firm-minded than gentle-hearted, and pride themselves on objectivity. Also, thinkers do not have a problem making difficult decisions, think its more important to be right than liked, put more importance on things that are logical and scientific, and remember numbers and figures easier than names and faces.

On the contrary, feelers (F) tend to think "good decisions" are ones that take feelings into account. They will do almost anything to accommodate others, think about how decisions will affect those involved, enjoy helping people with what they need, will readily take back a comment that may have offended someone, and are embarrassed by conflict and try to avoid or smother it.

Judging versus Perceiving

The judgers (J) often have to wait for others who are usually late, feel that everything has its own place, and think that if everyone would do what they are supposed to do the world would be a better place. Js have days scheduled ahead of time and do not like it when that schedule is altered, do not like surprises, keep to-do lists, and thrive on order. It is not unlikely for others to perceive judgers as being angry, even though they are just stating an opinion.

On the other hand, perceivers (P) are easily distracted, love to explore the unknown, do not plan tasks ahead of time, finish projects right at the deadline, believe that creativity, spontaneity, and responsiveness are more important than order, turn work into play, and frequently change the subject in conversations.

The Sixteen Profiles

While it is beneficial to know the differences between each end of the four previously mentioned dichotomies, it is also vital to remember that a person is not simply a sum of their four parts, it is the interaction between each of the four preferences that shapes a personality. A more in depth exploration into these personality types shows that they each have unique characteristics that shed light onto their strengths and weaknesses.

Extraverted Thinking Types: ESTJ and ENTJ

The first group is the extraverted thinking types (ESTJ and ENTJ). Extraverted thinking types are descriptive of executives who excel at organization and decision-making. They very much dislike any confusion, lack of order, or inefficiency (Briggs-

Myers, 1980). Extraverted thinkers are more apt to prefer judging to perceiving, and they must learn to develop their perceptive side in order to strengthen their judgments.

According to Myers-Briggs (1962), due to their sensing nature, ESTJ's are matter-of-fact, practical, realistic, and concerned with the here and now. They take in information using the five senses and anything that cannot be taken in using the five senses, such as any abstract idea or theory, is considered intangible and less acceptable (Briggs-Myers, 1980). In contrast, an ENTJ "has more intellectual interest, curiosity for new ideas as such, tolerance for theory, taste for complex problems, insight, vision and concern for long range possibilities" (Myers-Briggs, 1962, p. A-1).

Introverted Thinking Types: ISTP and INTP

Similar to the extraverted thinking types, introverted thinkers are also analytical and impersonal; however, unlike extroverted thinkers, they use their thinking to analyze the world, not to run it. In order to be as effective as possible, introverted thinkers must learn to develop their sensing or intuition so as to give them enough to think about, otherwise their thinking will become unproductive (Briggs-Myers, 1980).

ISTPs are able to see realities and have a "great capacity for facts and details" (Myers-Briggs, 1962, p. A-2). They are good at applied sciences, especially mechanics, and they are usually good with their hands. If not interested in sciences, they are good at deriving meaning from unorganized facts, such as in the field of statistics (Briggs-Myers, 1980). INTPs are also critical of themselves and are driven by forces such as flawlessness, cleverness, competency, and self-mastery. They are the most intelligently profound of

each of the sixteen types and are "quite likely to be more interested in analyzing a problem and discovering where the solution lies than in carrying out their ideas" (Briggs-Myers, 1980, p. 92).

Extraverted Feeling Types: ESFJ and ENFJ

Extraverted feelers value relationships with people above anything else. They are "friendly, tactful, sympathetic, and able almost always to express the feelings appropriate to the moment" (Briggs-Myers, 1980, p. 93). Due to their judging nature, extraverted feelers are more comfortable when decisions have been made; however, they do not always like to be the one to make those decisions. The perceptive side of their personality must be developed so as to avoid making quick decisions or jumping to conclusions.

ESFJs are "matter-of-fact and practical, conventional, copiously and factually conversational, and interested in possessions, beautiful homes, and all the tangible adornments of living" (Briggs-Myers, 1980). They adapt well to routine and need to work in a comfortable environment where they can socialize with co-workers. ENFJs share the same concern for other people as the ESFJs; however they see possibilities rather than realities and have more curiosity for new ideas. They enjoy books and theories more than their counterparts, and are quite gifted in expression, usually in speaking to an audience (Myers-Briggs, 1962, p. A-3).

Introverted Feeling Types: ISFP and INFP

The introverted feeling types are similar to the extroverted feeling types in that they have the same wealth of feeling; however, they care more deeply about fewer things

and their warmth may not be evident until they know someone quite well (Myers-Briggs, 1962). They are usually open-minded and adaptable, because of their perceptive process, until something they value strongly is going to be comprised, and then they stand firm. If introverted feelers do not develop their perceptive process, they will have "so little sense of reality that [they] will aspire to the impossible and achieve frustratingly little" (Myers-Briggs, 1962, p. A-4).

"The contrast between the real and the ideal weighs more heavily upon the ISFPs, who are more sharply aware of the actual state of affairs, than upon the INFPs, whose intuition suggests hopeful avenues of improvement" (Briggs-Myers, 1980, p. 98). ISFP types are considered the most modest of the 16 types as they are consistently underestimating their abilities and accomplishments. An INFP type is excellent at seeing the possibilities in people, and therefore is drawn to fields such as counseling, psychology, teaching, literature, and research. INFPs have a strong gift for language and, because of their introversion, prefer to express this gift through writing (Myers-Briggs, 1980).

Extraverted Sensing Types: ESTP and ESFP

Extraverted sensors are known for their realism. They have a unique ability to use facts in situations of conflict and "people of this type may prove to be remarkably good at pulling conflicting factions together and making things run smoothly" (Briggs-Myers, 1980, p. 101). These types have a true enthusiasm for life and are always looking to try new things, as long as the things are tangible and can be experiences through the five

senses. Because of their perceptive focus, extraverted sensors value flexibility, adaptability, open-mindedness, and tolerance.

Due to their preference for thinking, ESTPs are able to understand principles and theories better than ESFPs. They are also able to make decisions based on facts rather than the people involved. This allows them to have accurate and reliable judgment and they can be tough when needed. In contrast, ESFPs will make decisions based on people. They possess a "marked friendliness, tact, and ease in handling human contacts as well as a sound and practical estimate of people" (Briggs-Myers, 1980, p.104). While they are able to interact with people exceptionally well, their genuine concern for others may result in too much leniency in disciplinary situations.

Introverted Sensing Types: ISTJ and ISFJ

Introverted sensing types are very dependable and they have a "complete, realistic, practical respect both for the facts and for whatever responsibilities these facts create" (Briggs-Myers, 1980, p.104-105). Since these types have a strong preference for sensing, they like facts and are able to remember and use them incredibly well. They look at facts from their own individual angle, and often react privately to the things they sense. It is not often that they will vocalize these perceptions; however, when they do say what is on their minds, it may be "absurd, irreverent, touching, or hilarious, but never predictable, because their way of sensing life is intensely individual" (briggs-Myers, 1908, p. 106).

While they share many similarities, ISTJs and ISFJs value different things in life. According to Myers-Briggs (1962), ISTJs focus heavily on analysis, logic, and

decisiveness while ISFJs focus on loyalty, consideration, and the common welfare. While ISFJs are more interested in people and have a genuine concern for others' feelings, ISTJs make a great lawyers or accountants due to their thoroughness and meticulous attention to detail. An ISFJ is a good type for a family doctor or a nurse because of the ability to make others feel comfortable.

Extraverted Intuitive Types: ENTP and ENFP

The extraverted intuitive types are innovators who are energized by inspirations and will work tirelessly until their vision is complete. They possess a variety of skills and talents and are consistently taking on projects; however, they may not finish these projects unless their judgment process is developed. They must be careful to only take on projects that will be valuable and they must continue with the projects until they have firm establishment that the project will or will not work. Extraverted intuitive types are charismatic and have a unique ability to get what they want from others. "This gift is a combination of ingenuity, charm, and understanding the other person" (Briggs-Myers, 1980, p.110).

According to Myers-Briggs (1962), ENTPs and ENFPs will excel in any area that they are interested in; however, they are interested in very different areas. The ENTP is more independent, analytical, and critical and is less concerned with people than with projects. An ENTP is likely to enjoy the world of inventions, science, and problem solving. In contrast, ENFPs have more enthusiasm and concern for people. They are very

good at recognizing the potential in individuals and assisting them in reaching that potential. An ENFP is likely to be a teacher, artist, salesman, or advertising executive.

Introverted Intuitive Types: INTJ and INFJ

Much like the extroverted intuitive types, the introverted intuitive types are driven by a vision; however, theirs is an inner vision. They are "motivated by inspiration, which they value above everything else and use confidently for their best achievements in any field they choose" (Briggs-Myers, 1980, p.112). They are extremely determined and can be seen as stubborn. Similarly, they welcome challenges and see nothing as impossible; it may take a little longer, but not much.

INTJs are the most individualistic and independent of all the 16 types. Because of their independence and preference for thinking, they have a tendency to ignore people's feelings and need to make a strong effort to understand and appreciate others. INTJs can be effective executives due to their organizing ability and tendency to reorganize things until they are perfect. In contrast, INFJs are gentle, compassionate, and accepting; however can be very stubborn. They, also, can appear extraverted due to their preference for feeling; but it is that innate concern for the welfare of others that is extraverted, not their personality as a whole (Briggs-Myers, 1980).

The Sixteen Profiles of Resident Assistants

In his book *RA Types,* Coleman (2003) took the descriptions of each of the previously mentioned sixteen personality types and applied them directly to the Resident

Assistant position. The following table (Table 1) and descriptions provide a brief illustration of how personality type is related to the Resident Assistant position.

Resident Assistants who are ISTJ are responsible, consistent, and reliable. They frequently put their job ahead of academic and personal responsibilities. Their strengths lie in their administrative abilities and they work best in a traditional hierarchical environment. ISFJs are loyal, sympathetic, and considerate of others. They follow the rules and like to know exactly what is expected of them. If they are aware of their expectations, they will excel and master the necessary skills, but they do so to please others instead of for their own benefit.

INFJ's tend to be future-oriented and like harmonious relationships. They are more loyal to their own ideals than to other people or organizations. In contrast are INTJ Resident Assistants who are not focused on relationships with people. They are individualistic and very independent and would rather spend energy focused on education and learning than on relationships.

While ISTP Resident Assistants share similar characteristics to ISTJs, such as attention to detail and logical reasoning, they do not enjoy the same amount of structure. They enjoy having their senses stimulated and enjoy situations, such as crises, which provide stimulation and allow them to use their skills and knowledge. ISFPs are gentle, compassionate, and open. "Their flexibility and concern for others are two of their defining traits" (p. 38). They also prefer harmonious relationships and are extremely caring individuals.

Table 1: The Sixteen Profiles of Resident Assistants

ISTJ The Dutiful Resident Assistant	**ISFJ** The Helping Resident Assistant	**INFJ** The Idealistic Resident Assistant	**INTJ** The Designing Resident Assistant
ISTP The Problem-Solving Resident Assistant	**ISFP** The Caring Resident Assistant	**INFP** The Perfectionist Resident Assistant	**INTP** The Analyzing Resident Assistant
ESTP The Hummingbird Resident Assistant	**ESFP** The Social Resident Assistant	**ENFP** The Adventurous Resident Assistant	**ENTP** The Competitive Resident Assistant
ESTJ The Planning Resident Assistant	**ESFJ** The Assessing Resident Assistant	**ENFJ** The Humanistic Resident Assistant	**ENTJ** The Executive Resident Assistant

Source: Coleman, J.K. (2003). *RA Types: Understanding Resident Assistants by using the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator preferences.* University of Georgia: Association of College and University Housing Officers-International.

It is hard for INFP Resident Assistants to ask others for help. They are deeply involved in their beliefs and need privacy and independence. The last of the introverted Resident Assistants are the INTPs who are inquisitive and thoughtful. They want things to make sense, are quiet and reflective thinkers, and are flexible to handle change and pressure.

As a whole, extraverted Resident Assistants are more outgoing than the introverts and gain their energy from being with people. More specifically, ESTP Resident Assistants are outgoing, practical, and realistic. They are direct and blunt, they think on their feet, and thought and action are often simultaneous. The energy they possess is for themselves and not for others. ESFPs are often the best community builders on the staff.

They are spontaneous, flexible, fun loving, social, and enjoy life. They are also empathetic and generous, giving freely of their time and money.

ENFPs are the typical "people-person". They are enthusiastic and like to learn about everything and everyone around them. They are good at showing their appreciation for others and excel in verbal communication skills. ENTPs are quite similar, but they also have the unique ability to "adapt to situations and enjoy working in environments where they can use their ability to respond to changing circumstances" (p. 77). They do not like routines and are always looking for new and different things.

Resident Assistants who are EST's are the natural leaders of the group. They are the planners and organizers who have an innate need to be in charge. They are highly accountable, holding both themselves and others accountable at all times. They are also big into traditions. This is also true of ESFJs. They are "helpful staff members who value people, personal values, traditions, and getting the job done" (p. 46). They have a strong sense of civic responsibility and take their role as a Resident Assistant very seriously.

The ENFJ Resident Assistants have a very warm and likeable personality, and their enthusiasm is contagious. They are able to recognize others' potential and help them reach that potential. The last of the sixteen types is ENTJ, a very strong-willed Resident Assistant who is not likely to take no for an answer. An ENTJ is also a natural leader who is perceived as an authority figure who knows what is going on.

While it is not necessary to memorize the characteristics of each of the sixteen personality types, it is vital to recognize that they all have differences and each type has its

strengths and weaknesses. When working with a group of individuals, such as a Resident Assistant staff, recognizing and capitalizing on each person's strengths will allow for a stronger group and a more positive experience for each person.

Norms

A number of sources (Isachsen & Berens, 1991; Jeffries, 1991; Keirsey & Bates, 1984; Kroeger & Thuesen, 1988; Macdaid, McCaulley & Kainz, 1995; Briggs-Myers & McCaulley, 1985) have estimated percentages of the population that prefer each characteristic. They estimated that overall, 70-75% of the population prefers extraversion to introversion and the same percentage prefers sensing to intuition. The entire population is split at 50% on the thinking versus feeling scale; however, 60-70% of men prefer thinking while 60-65% of women prefer feeling. Finally, they found that 50-65% of the population prefers judgment to perception. Since it is difficult to generalize the entire population of people who have ever recorded MBTI scores, type counts of several subsets of the whole population have been recorded in what is called the *Atlas of Type Tables* (Macdaid, McCaulley, & Kainz, 1995).

According to the *Atlas*, a study of 232,557 MBTI indicators recorded in the Center for Applied Psychological Type (CAPT) database, found that 53% of the population preferred extraversion to introversion, 54% preferred sensing to intuition, 58% preferred feeling to thinking, and 57% preferred judging to perceiving. Table 2 and Table 3 were taken from the *Atlas* and illustrate the MBTI type distribution for 232,557 individuals who have taken the MBTI.

Table 2: MBTI Preferences of CAPT Databank Total Population

CAPT Databank		
	Number	Percentage
E	123771	53.00
I	108783	47.00
S	125859	54.00
N	106698	46.00
T	98467	42.00
F	134090	58.00
J	132521	57.00
P	100036	43.00

Source: Macdaid, G.P., McCaulley, M.H. & Kainz, R.L. (1995). *Atlas of type tables*. Gainesville, FL: Center for Applications of Psychological Type, Inc.

Table 3: MBTI Profiles of CAPT Databank Total Population

CAPT Databank		
	Number	Percentage
ISTJ	21755	9.35
ISFJ	21581	9.28
INFJ	9990	4.30
INTJ	9868	4.24
ISTP	7419	3.19
ISFP	11266	4.84
INFP	17684	7.60
INTP	9223	3.97
ESTP	7154	3.08
ESFP	12718	5.47
ENFP	24472	10.52
ENTP	10100	4.34
ESTJ	21298	9.16
ESFJ	22668	9.75
ENFJ	13711	5.90
ENTJ	11650	5.01

Source: Macdaid, G.P., McCaulley, M.H. & Kainz, R.L. (1995). *Atlas of type tables*. Gainesville, FL: Center for Applications of Psychological Type, Inc.

In addition to the hundreds of specific studies reported in *The Atlas*, the authors provide the "normal typologies" of several categories and age groups of people. Of specific interest are the "normal" profiles of males and females who are of traditional college age. In a sample of 14519 females between 18-25 years of age who were enrolled in college, Macdaid et al (1995, p. 54) found that approximately 60% preferred extraversion to introversion, 61% preferred sensing to intuition, 68% preferred feeling to thinking, and 58% preferred judging to perceiving. The complete distribution of traditional age college females is found in Table 4 and Table 5.

In a similar study of 12637 traditional age college males, Macdaid et al (1995, p. 61) found that 51% preferred extraversion to introversion, 58% preferred sensing to intuition, 63% preferred thinking to feeling, and 53% preferred judging to perceiving. It is not only important to note the differences between these norms and that of the general population, but also the differences between the males and females who are all traditional college age students. Tables 6 and Table 7 display the distribution of MBTI types for traditional age college males.

Numerous other studies have been conducted to determine subsets of the general population of people. The following are examples of the Myers-Briggs profiles for different occupations, which demonstrate that different occupations attract people with different Myers-Briggs preferences. For example, the distribution of managers and administrators (n=7463) is very different than that of religious workers (n=2010).

Table 4: MBTI Preferences of Tradition Age College Females

Traditional Age College Females		
	Number	Percentage
E	8677	60.00
I	5842	40.00
S	8914	61.00
N	5605	39.00
T	4615	32.00
F	9904	68.00
J	8371	58.00
P	6148	42.00

Source: Macdaid, G.P., McCaulley, M.H. & Kainz, R.L. (1995). *Atlas of type tables*. Gainesville, FL: Center for Applications of Psychological Type, Inc.

Table 5: MBTI Profiles of Traditional Age College Females

Traditional Age College Females		
	Number	Percentage
ISTJ	996	7.00
ISFJ	1665	11.00
INFJ	550	4.00
INTJ	314	2.00
ISTP	365	2.00
ISFP	834	6.00
INFP	823	6.00
INTP	304	2.00
ESTP	408	3.00
ESFP	1210	8.00
ENFP	1705	12.00
ENTP	508	4.00
ESTJ	1260	9.00
ESFJ	2185	15.00
ENFJ	932	6.00
ENTJ	469	3.00

Source: Macdaid, G.P., McCaulley, M.H. & Kainz, R.L. (1995). *Atlas of type tables*. Gainesville, FL: Center for Applications of Psychological Type, Inc.

Table 6: MBTI Preferences of Traditional Age College Males

Traditional Age College Males		
	Number	Percentage
E	6468	51.00
I	6169	49.00
S	7356	58.00
N	5281	42.00
T	8011	63.00
F	4626	37.00
J	6698	53.00
P	5939	47.00

Source: Macdaid, G.P., McCaulley, M.H. & Kainz, R.L. (1995). *Atlas of type tables*. Gainesville, FL: Center for Applications of Psychological Type, Inc.

Table 7: MBTI Preferences of Traditional Age College Males

Traditional Age College Males		
	Number	Percentage
ISTJ	1577	13.00
ISFJ	687	5.00
INFJ	335	3.00
INTJ	683	5.00
ISTP	860	7.00
ISFP	517	4.00
INFP	672	5.00
INTP	838	7.00
ESTP	849	7.00
ESFP	557	4.00
ENFP	791	6.00
ENTP	855	7.00
ESTJ	1619	13.00
ESFJ	690	5.00
ENFJ	377	3.00
ENTJ	730	6.00

Source: Macdaid, G.P., McCaulley, M.H. & Kainz, R.L. (1995). *Atlas of type tables*. Gainesville, FL: Center for Applications of Psychological Type, Inc.

The Myers-Briggs profiles of managers and administrators are shown in tables 8 and 9. Managers and administrators prefer extroversion (56.67%) to introversion, sensing (56.32%) to intuition, thinking (61.56%) to feeling, and judging (69.32%) to perceiving. In contrast, tables 10 and 11 show that religious workers prefer extroversion (57.56%) to introversion, intuition (50.70%) to sensing, feeling (65.47%) to thinking, and judging (65.12%) to perceiving.

Similarly, there are noticeable differences between the profiles of teachers (n=16676) and lawyers (n=271). The Myers-Briggs profiles of teachers are displayed in tables 12 and 13, and they show that teachers prefer extroversion (50.51%) to introversion, sensing (50.84%) to intuition, feeling (58.01%) to thinking, and judging (65.65%) to perceiving. In contrast, tables 14 and 15 show that lawyers share few of these same tendencies. It is evident that lawyers prefer introversion (58.67%) to extroversion, intuition (69.37%) to sensing, thinking (64.94%) to feeling, and judging (53.87%) to perceiving. This information demonstrates that individuals with different preferences are attracted to different occupations.

Development of the MBTI

In order to determine each of the preferences and the sixteen codes, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator has been developing since the early twentieth century. Since its original design, the MBTI has been altered and changed in several ways; however, it still maintains its original purpose: to help people discover and understand their natural personality preferences. The MBTI is not like other personality indicators; it has several distinct characteristics that have allowed it to become the most widely used psychometric

Table 8: MBTI Preferences of Managers and Administrators

Managers and Administrators		
	Number	Percentage
E	4229	56.67
I	3234	43.33
S	4203	56.32
N	3260	43.68
T	4594	61.56
F	2869	38.44
J	5173	69.32
P	2290	30.68

Source: Macdaid, G.P., McCaulley, M.H. & Kainz, R.L. (1995). *Atlas of type tables*. Gainesville, FL: Center for Applications of Psychological Type, Inc, p. 175.

Table 9: MBTI Profiles of Managers and Administrators

Managers and Administrators		
	Number	Percentage
ISTJ	1115	14.94
ISFJ	469	6.28
INFJ	232	3.11
INTJ	421	5.64
ISTP	201	2.69
ISFP	189	2.53
INFP	340	4.56
INTP	267	3.58
ESTP	202	2.71
ESFP	209	2.80
ENFP	517	6.93
ENTP	365	4.89
ESTJ	1272	17.04
ESFJ	546	7.32
ENFJ	367	4.92
ENTJ	751	10.06

Source: Macdaid, G.P., McCaulley, M.H. & Kainz, R.L. (1995). *Atlas of type tables*. Gainesville, FL: Center for Applications of Psychological Type, Inc, p. 175.

Table 10: MBTI Preferences of Religious Workers – All Denominations

Religious Workers – All Denominations		
	Number	Percentage
E	1157	57.56
I	853	42.44
S	991	49.30
N	1019	50.70
T	694	34.53
F	1316	65.47
J	1309	65.12
P	701	34.88

Source: Macdaid, G.P., McCaulley, M.H. & Kainz, R.L. (1995). *Atlas of type tables*. Gainesville, FL: Center for Applications of Psychological Type, Inc, p. 463.

Table 11: MBTI Profiles of Religious Workers – All Denominations

Religious Workers – All Denominations		
	Number	Percentage
ISTJ	145	7.21
ISFJ	191	9.50
INFJ	152	7.56
INTJ	79	3.93
ISTP	28	1.39
ISFP	79	3.93
INFP	133	6.62
INTP	46	2.29
ESTP	36	1.79
ESFP	92	4.58
ENFP	224	11.14
ENTP	63	3.13
ESTJ	176	8.76
ESFJ	244	12.14
ENFJ	201	10.00
ENTJ	121	6.02

Source: Macdaid, G.P., McCaulley, M.H. & Kainz, R.L. (1995). *Atlas of type tables*. Gainesville, FL: Center for Applications of Psychological Type, Inc, p. 463.

Table 12: MBTI Preferences of Teachers

Teachers		
	Number	Percentage
E	8423	50.51
I	8253	49.49
S	8478	50.84
N	8198	49.16
T	7002	41.99
F	9674	58.01
J	10948	65.65
P	5728	34.35

Source: Macdaid, G.P., McCaulley, M.H. & Kainz, R.L. (1995). *Atlas of type tables*. Gainesville, FL: Center for Applications of Psychological Type, Inc, p. 258.

Table 13: MBTI Profiles of Teachers

Teachers		
	Number	Percentage
ISTJ	1877	11.26
ISFJ	1851	11.10
INFJ	1023	6.13
INTJ	871	5.22
ISTP	335	2.01
ISFP	549	3.29
INFP	1189	7.13
INTP	558	3.35
ESTP	254	1.52
ESFP	567	3.40
ENFP	1669	10.01
ENTP	607	3.64
ESTJ	1502	9.01
ESFJ	1543	9.25
ENFJ	1283	7.69
ENTJ	998	5.98

Source: Macdaid, G.P., McCaulley, M.H. & Kainz, R.L. (1995). *Atlas of type tables*. Gainesville, FL: Center for Applications of Psychological Type, Inc, p. 258.

Table 14: MBTI Preferences of Lawyers

Lawyers		
	Number	Percentage
E	112	41.33
I	159	58.67
S	83	30.63
N	188	69.37
T	176	64.94
F	95	35.06
J	146	53.87
P	125	46.13

Source: Macdaid, G.P., McCaulley, M.H. & Kainz, R.L. (1995). *Atlas of type tables*. Gainesville, FL: Center for Applications of Psychological Type, Inc, p. 312.

Table 15: MBTI Profiles of Lawyers

Lawyers		
	Number	Percentage
ISTJ	31	11.44
ISFJ	7	2.58
INFJ	15	5.54
INTJ	41	15.13
ISTP	16	5.90
ISFP	4	1.48
INFP	18	6.64
INTP	27	9.96
ESTP	1	0.37
ESFP	4	1.48
ENFP	32	11.81
ENTP	23	8.49
ESTJ	17	6.27
ESFJ	3	1.11
ENFJ	12	4.43
ENTJ	20	7.38

Source: Macdaid, G.P., McCaulley, M.H. & Kainz, R.L. (1995). *Atlas of type tables*. Gainesville, FL: Center for Applications of Psychological Type, Inc, p. 312.

test in the world (Dawes, 1998). First, the personality dichotomies are reflections of perceived dispositions that are evident from birth**.** "As young children, we begin to exercise a preference between two ways of perceiving or judging. As soon as that preference is established, a basic difference in development begins" (Lynch, 1987, p. 7). The use of dichotomies is also a unique concept as most other indicators base their personality profiles on continuums and "how much" of a characteristic a person possesses. The MBTI is concerned with how clear the preference is instead of how much is possessed. This means that an individual is not all one type and none of the other, a person simply prefers one function to another, and therefore is more comfortable with that function.

Katharine Briggs and Isabel Myers had two main goals for the development and implementation of the MBTI. First, they wanted their indicator to identify the basic preferences on each of the four dichotomous preference scales identified by Jung. Second, they wanted to include the identification and description of the sixteen personality types that arise from the interaction of the four preference scales. Isabel Myers knew that development of such an instrument would require painstaking work, but not even she could predict the obstacles that lay ahead.

According to Lawrence (1986), Myers dealt with fourteen key issues in the development and perfection of the MBTI. Initially, she had to overcome the attitudes of psychology professionals who doubted her work because she was not a psychologist. Further, the indicator she developed was based on the work of Jung, whom most

American psychologists did not hold in high regard. In terms of the indicator itself, Myers dealt with the issue of constraints of a self-report format, finding language that was not threatening and free from psychological jargon, and creating all forced-choice questions so as to represent the dichotomous nature of Jung's theory. Similarly, she had to design an indicator that could identify the dominant and auxiliary personality types, weigh the items to ensure accuracy, and keep the scales independent of one another. In addition, since each of the 16 types she envisioned was not equally represented in the population, Myers had to consider what precautions needed to be taken to give the less frequent types adequate consideration in the development of items. She had to develop balanced and unbiased items, account for ways that each type might answer (extraverts and introverts interpret questions differently), and ensure precision at the midpoint to be sure that each person was categorized correctly, if even by one point. Also factored in was the influence of type development on responses and setting the division point of each scale.

While Myers and Briggs did have to overcome many setbacks and challenges, Dawes (2004) indicates that the result proved extremely useful to society:

> The MBTI is probably the most widely used psychometric test in the world. Administered more than three million times per year in the U.S. alone, managers make use of the MBTI's classification of people into one of 16 psychological types to guide their decision-making in every area from recruitment and selection, team-building, and organizational change, to management and leadership development (p. 88).

Over 12 million people have taken the MBTI, and it has been translated into at least 30 languages (Type Resources, 1998).

MBTI Design

The MBTI is a forced-choice instrument, appropriate for use with high school students, adults over the age of 14, and even children (Briggs-Myers & McCaulley, 1985). The instrument consists of several forms, which have evolved since the original form, with the current standard form being Form M. Form M consists of 93 forced-choice questions, which means that the participant is forced to choose between one of two responses. For example, the first question on Form M asks the respondent "When you go out somewhere for the day, would you rather (A) plan what you will do and when, or (B) just go?" Completion of the 93 questions takes approximately 15-25 minutes. Each item on the indicator is related to one of the four bipolar scales (E/I, S/N, T/F, J/P), thus allowing the participants type preference to reveal itself in a non-threatening way. Form M is now widely used because it "contains the newest items, the most precise scoring procedure, and the most current standardization samples to produce scoring weights" (Briggs-Myers, et al., 1998, p. 106).

Although the MBTI has been refined significantly over the years, it does have inherent limitations. Coe (1992) points out several of these limitations. He mentions that the instrument gives no indication of one's values and motivations and that it does not measure pathology; however, that was not the intent of the indicator and is also argued to be a positive characteristic of the instrument. Finally, a respondent may be proficient in performing shadow functions, but that is not evident based on indicator results alone.

Reliability/Validity

Researchers, especially those developing an original instrument, take the concepts of reliability and validity very seriously. For that reason, Myers and Briggs conducted significant testing of their indicator, striving to achieve the highest levels of both reliability and validity. Reliability, which focuses on the degree to which a measure gives the same results if repeated, can be determined in several ways. One method is internal consistency, measured by determining split-half reliability. Internal consistency measures how consistent respondents' answers are on a given scale. This is accomplished by splitting the item pool into two halves and correlating the scores of the two halves using the Spearman-Brown coefficient (Gay, L.R. & Airasian, P., 1992, p. 143). Reliability of the MBTI is affected by age and achievement level of those taking it, but reliability increases with age and the indicator has proven to be very reliable for those high school aged and above and with at least a seventh grade reading level. According to Briggs-Myers and McCaulley (1985), split half scores for the four codes range from .83 for the E/I scale to .87 for the J/P scale. While those scores are quite good, MBTI reliability improved even further from Form G to Form M. Split half scores for Form M are above .90 for all of the four codes (Briggs, et al., 1998).

Reliability can also be measured using the test-retest method. This involves recording respondents' scores longitudinally to measure how stable a characteristic is over time. The more a respondent's scores change, the lower the test-retest reliability. As with split-half reliability, Briggs, et al. (1998) found that test-retest scores improved for Form

M. "With the exception of the T-F scale for males, the test-retest reliability of the scales is quite good over a two-and-one-half year period" (p. 162). Although meta-analysis data is not available for test-retest of Form M, three separate populations were tested and retested over a 4 week period and yielded the following results: E-I scale average of .93, S-N scale average of .92, T-F scale average of .88, and J-P scale average of .93 (p. 163).

Equally as important as reliability is the concept of validity. The validity of the MBTI was tested with its relationship to other personality measures, such as the Jungian type survey and the Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory (SII), and with its relationship to actual behavior. According to Briggs-Myers and McCaulley (1985), data exist to show that the MBTI does relate to various other personality tests such as the SII, and MBTI scores do indeed correlate with Jungian theory. In fact, correlation tests between the MBTI and the Jungian Type Survey (JTS) show the following significant results: E .68 ($p < .01$), I .66 ($p < .01$), S .54 ($p < .01$), N.47 ($p < .01$), T .33 ($p < .01$), F .23 ($p < .05$), which demonstrate that the two instruments appear to be tapping the same constructs (Briggs, et al., 1998, p. 184).

Applications

The MBTI has several practical applications and has proven useful in areas such as goal setting, time management, hiring and firing, conflict resolution, problem solving, team building, ethics, and stress management (Kroeger & Thuesen, 1992). Other areas of interest investigate the distribution of preferences for subsets of the general population and whether or not personality profiles predict performance. Christopher Aviles (2001)

published a commentary piece which explored the possibility of using the MBTI in a human resources setting. He stated that the MBTI should be used in human services organizations because it is designed for use with healthy respondents, and it is nonjudgmental. Similarly, the MBTI can be applied to training and development of staff because of its ability to characterize personality differences as strengths or 'gifts'. If each individual's strengths are taken into consideration throughout training and development, they will be able to maximize those strengths for the benefit of the team. Conceptualizing employee personality preferences as strengths and understanding why a workplace should have a variety of the eight preferences is just the beginning, however. Using the MBTI to identify workplace conflicts does not resolve the conflict; it simply offers a means by which to address the conflict.

Coe (1992) agreed with Aviles' ideas of using the MBTI from a human resources perspective, but also noted that the instrument could be misused in such a setting. For example, Coe stated that the MBTI should never be used for employee selection or to unfairly stereotype employees based on their preference. It may seem to be harmless; however, it is not because of the instrument's "inherent limitations: (1) it does not measure shadow integration, meaning that an individual may be comfortable exercising their shadow function, but that does not appear on the MBTI; (2) it does not measure how well one performs the four preferred functions; and (3) it can be easily beat, giving an unfair advantage to someone familiar with the instrument" (p. 519). To exclude someone based only on his or her type is a misunderstanding of the MBTI. He noted that employers

could look at the applicants' past experiences, and realize that the applicant is indeed very comfortable with their shadow functions and can perform those shadow functions well.

In a work environment, the MBTI is a useful tool for team building, strengthening communication, decision making, and diagnosing organizational dysfunctions. Coe also states "The MBTI gives team members a better understanding of why others behave the way they do. Team members learn to appreciate each other's differences and see how they can be used as a source of complementarity (p. 516)." Also, the MBTI is a useful management tool for building work teams and for strengthening employee relations. The MBTI is used to improve supervisory relations and facilitate organizational change. Moreover, it is helpful in explaining and resolving employee conflict. If employees are familiar with their MBTI type and the type of their coworkers, they can realize that misunderstandings and disagreements are not inherently negative, but that it may be the result of a difference in type, and recognizing that difference can aid in the resolution of conflict.

Another example of a profile study is Sears and Kennedy's 1997 personality profile of prospective educators. Using the MBTI, they examined the personality preferences of 886 students who were enrolled in an early teaching experience program, and continued on to become certified in either elementary, K through 12, secondary, or special education. The authors determined that students interested in elementary education were more likely to prefer sensing, feeling, and judging, while those interested in secondary teaching were more likely to prefer intuition, thinking, and judging.

A similar study looked at the personality profiles of 2165 chess players (Kelly, 1985). Kelly found that both masters and senior masters were significantly more introverted, intuitive and thinking than the general population. Chess masters were also significantly more judging and less perceiving than the general population and more introverted, intuitive and judging than the average chess players. Correlations between MBTI preferences and playing strength "suggest that only intuition, and to a lesser extent, judging, appear to be both consistently and significantly related to playing strength at advanced levels" (282). From this study it is obvious that chess players vary from the general population to the extent that the two groups possess different personality and temperament characteristics. Also, chess masters significantly vary from average players.

Data were collected by Macdaid, McCaulley, and Kainz (1995) regarding college students. In a sample of 10342 students at Auburn University, it was found that 57.4% of the students preferred extraversion, 56.95% preferred sensing, 68.71% preferred feeling, and 54.22% preferred perceiving. A significantly smaller sample of 2514 students at the University of Florida revealed similar tendencies. It is noteworthy for this study that the personality preferences of college students differ from that of the general population.

Not surprisingly, variation also exists within certain college courses. A 1996 study completed by Filbeck and Smith identified the personality profiles of 94 students in three sections of a corporate finance class at a large urban university in the Midwest. They discovered that 66% of the students were extroverted, 76% were sensors, 61% were judgers, and 72% were thinkers. The most prevalent group was the ESTJ's (22.3%);

second was the ISTJ's (18.1%). The fact that the most prevalent types were ESTJ and ISTJ was not surprising since, as previously displayed in Table 9, areas of business disproportionately attract students interested in controlling (J) and analyzing (T) concrete measures (S) of success, such as money and commerce. In a similar study, Laribee (1994) discovered that students whose profile was ENFP were well represented in first-level accounting courses, but in relative terms, their representation was lower in upper-level classes. There was also an overrepresentation of S, T and J personalities in final year accounting courses.

Performance prediction is another application of the MBTI. Borg and Shapiro (1996) conducted a performance correlation study to determine how personality type affects one's ability to be an effective student of economics. They used a sample of 119 students in a Principles of Macroeconomics class at the University of North Florida. The authors "found that personality type has an important influence on a student's success (or lack thereof) in principles of macroeconomics" (p. 22). In this particular economics class, ENTP, ESTP, and ENFP personality types did significantly worse than students with the ISTJ type. The greatest numbers of students were ISTJ and they did the best in the course. "A typical student with the personality type ISTJ has a combined probability of 84.2% of earning an A, B, or C in the class" in comparison to the sample probability of 72.3% (p. 20).

Randall (1993) explored the relationship between MBTI type and performance for first year law students. The study consisted of 154 first year law students who completed Form G of the MBTI at orientation. Randall found that students who preferred extraversion had a lower mean first semester grade point average (2.499) than those preferring introversion (2.610), which is not a statistically significant difference. The

differences between the first semester grade point averages of first year law students who preferred sensing (2.532) to intuition (2.573) were not correlated or statistically significant. In regards to the thinking versus feeling dichotomy, students who preferred thinking had a higher first semester grade point average (2.585) than those who preferred feeling (2.440), which was not statistically significant. Finally, the difference in first semester grade point average for students who preferred judging (2.568) to perceiving (2.523) was not statistically significant. Randall concluded that "while all types may perform well in law school, it is predictable that I, N, T, J types may have a relative, if not significant advantage" (13). Randall's conclusion is questionable due to the fact that none of the differences between the individual dichotomies were found to be statistically significant; however, it is predicted that the INTJ type would have an advantage.

A third study examined the relationship between performance in accounting classes and MBTI type. The study was conducted by Oswick and Barber (1998), and consisted of 344 United Kingdom-based students in an introductory-level accounting course. They looked to see if MBTI type was correlated to performance, categorized as top performers (upper quartile), moderate performers (inter quartile), and poor performers (lower quartile). They expected the performance of STJs to be better than that of NFPs, which was the case; however, the difference was not statistically significant. "In terms of performance on introductory level accounting courses, personality type does not appear to have a bearing upon level of achievement" (p. 253).

While other similar studies exist, the point needing illustration is simple: information about how personality contributes to the success or failure of individuals in the work place provides information that can help individuals utilize their strengths and overcome their weaknesses to achieve personal goals and bring success to their organizations (Schloemer & Schloemer, 1997). Regardless of the job or organization

type, people whose personality attributes match their job requirements tend to perform well and have a higher level of job satisfaction (Briggs-Myers, 1980). For this reason, it is crucial to the success of a team that all members recognize their own personality preferences, those of the other team members, and how to work together to utilize differences in personality in a positive way. Personality differences can be harmful to team success if not identified and used properly.

In conclusion, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator is used world-wide and has proven to be a reliable and valid instrument for determining personality preferences and profiles. It has been used to determine the profiles of certain subsets of the population, such as lawyers, doctors, and teachers. The MBTI has also been used to predict performance in the classroom and workplace settings. This particular study used the MBTI to determine of there was a dominant MBTI profile for Resident Assistants, and to ascertain if that MBTI profile differed based on demographic characteristics. Similarly, the MBTI was used to determine if the MBTI profile of Resident Assistants was different than that of traditional aged college students and the general population.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

Survey design, using an established instrument, was chosen for the conduct of the study because it best fits the research, and because the instrument has proven to be both valid and reliable. This type of study was chosen because it fits the given description of research, which states that it "requires the collection of standardized, quantifiable information from all members of a population or sample" (Gay, L.R. & Airasian, P., 2003, p. 282). Although the MBTI is not labeled as a questionnaire, it has the same strengths as a questionnaire with few of the drawbacks. One of the biggest difficulties in conducting a questionnaire study is the development of a credible questionnaire, which Briggs and Myers painstakingly constructed. While some still have certain reservations about use of the MBTI, it is widely accepted across several fields and is the most frequently used personality indicator in the world. The MBTI is also very beneficial for use as a questionnaire because it has been thoroughly tested, it is clear and concise, does not contain biased questions, and it is easily administered to a large group of respondents simultaneously.

Site and Population

The study took place at three institutions of higher education, one large public research university and two small, private religiously affiliated institutions, in the southeast United States. Multiple institutions were chosen to increase the number and diversity of the participants as well as to determine if MBTI profiles are different based on type of

institution. The private institutions used were chosen for several reasons including location, size of Resident Assistant staff, and accessibility. In addition, including small, private, religiously affiliated institutions allowed for the contrast of MBTI type based on type of institution, in that the public and private institutions differ based on governance, mission, and size. The public research university was chosen because it employs a large number of Resident Assistants, the Resident Assistant staff is diverse in terms of gender, race, and field of study, and it too was accessible.

Participants were the Resident Assistants employed by the Housing and/or Residence Life departments at the various institutions. Due to the accessibility of all Resident Assistants, the entire populations were used rather than a sample. The public research institution employs 157 Resident Assistants, one of the private institutions employs 50 Resident Assistants, and the other private institution employs 33 Resident Assistants.

All data collected came from the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Form M template-scored scantron. Form M consists of 93 forced-choice questions, which yielded a four-letter personality profile of the individual who completed the form. The four-letter profile was used as a variable in determining if, and to what extent, Resident Assistants as a group possessed a dominant MBTI profile. In addition, using the template-scored scantron allowed for the collection of demographic information. Each participant was instructed to complete the sections for specific demographic information (gender, ethnicity, and field of study) located on the scantron form. This demographic information

determined if MBTI profiles varied significantly based on any of the aforementioned demographic factors.

Procedures

The initial step in the research process was to obtain permission from each individual institution as well as to gain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval at the University of Tennessee. The Director of Housing and/or Residence Life at each institution was contacted to seek access to the Resident Assistant staff. The Directors were asked to sign a letter of consent (Appendix 1) indicating their willingness to participate in the study. These letters were compiled and submitted with the appropriate approval forms to the IRB.

Following IRB approval, each institution was contacted to schedule administration of the MBTI Form M to the Resident Assistants for completion. In order to obtain information from the greatest number of Resident Assistants possible, the researcher distributed the forms to Resident Assistants for completion during a hall staff meeting. This ensured that proper instruction was given regarding the MBTI and it also ensured that the data were collected immediately. Each participant received a letter of consent (Appendix 2), Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Form M question book, and Form M scantron. Names of participants were not recorded, so as to ensure anonymity. Participants interested in knowing the outcome of the study were asked to attach a separate sheet of paper with their name and contact information.

Data Analysis

Once the MBTI forms were completed, they were scored using scoring templates to obtain the four-letter personality profile. For this particular study, the Career Services office at the researcher's home institution agreed to allow the use of their scoring templates. Initially, MBTI profiles were compiled and counted to determine which profiles, if any, were not represented and the frequency counts of those that were represented.

A simple Chi-Square test for independence was used to answer each of the research questions, which are questions of relationship. Chi-square is a "nonparametric test of significance appropriate when the data are in the form of frequency counts or percentages and proportions that can be converted to frequencies" (Gay, L.R. & Airasian, P, 1998, p. 478). Essentially, this test determined if the frequency counts found were the result of chance or of an actual statistically significant relationship.

The first research question addressed only the frequency counts of the entire sample of Resident Assistants. Once the forms were scored, frequency counts were organized into tables. The second research question asked if there was a notable difference in MBTI profiles based on various demographic characteristics. Frequency counts and chi-square calculations were also displayed in tables .

In order to answer the third and fourth research questions, the frequency counts of MBTI profiles for all participating Resident Assistants were compared to existing

frequency counts of traditional college students and the general population published by the Center for Applications of Psychological Type (CAPT).

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Answering the Research Questions

The MBTI indicator was distributed to 237 Resident Assistants at three institutions of higher education in the southeast United States. Of the 237 indicators distributed, 182 were returned, for a return rate of 77%. Demographic analysis of the 182 indicators returned showed that: 138 participants were from a public institution and 44 were from private institutions, 101 participants were female and 81 were male, 123 participants were Caucasian, 50 were Black, and 9 identified their race as "Other". In terms of field of study, the participants identified the following majors: 62, Arts and Sciences; 65, Education, Health and Human Services; 36, Business; and 19, Legal/Government.

Question 1: What does the MBTI profile of a Resident Assistant look like?

Of the 182 Resident Assistants who completed the indicator, 63% preferred extraversion to introversion, 51% preferred intuition to sensing, 60% preferred feeling to thinking, and 57% preferred judging to perceiving. The majority (52%) of Resident Assistants were one of the following four Myers-Briggs types: ENFP (19%), ISTJ (13%), ENFJ (11%), and ESFJ (9%). The complete breakdown of Myers-Briggs types for Resident Assistants is displayed in Table 16 and Table 17.

Table 16: MBTI Preferences of Resident Assistant Population

Resident Assistants (n=182)		
	Number	Percentage
E	114	63.00
I	68	37.00
S	89	49.00
N	93	51.00
T	72	40.00
F	110	60.00
J	104	57.00
P	78	43.00

Table 17: MBTI Profiles of Resident Assistant Population

Resident Assistants (n=182)		
	Number	Percentage
ISTJ	24	13.00
ISFJ	11	6.00
INFJ	8	4.00
INTJ	5	3.00
ISTP	2	1.00
ISFP	5	3.00
INFP	10	5.00
INTP	2	1.00
ESTP	10	5.00
ESFP	6	3.00
ENFP	34	19.00
ENTP	10	5.00
ESTJ	15	8.00
ESFJ	16	9.00
ENFJ	20	11.00
ENTJ	4	2.00

Question 2: Is there a significant difference in MBTI profile based on demographic characteristics such as: type of institution (public versus private), gender, race, or field of study?

Type of Institution.

Out of the 138 public institution Resident Assistants, 65% preferred extraversion to introversion, 51% preferred intuition to sensing, 64% preferred feeling to thinking, and 51% preferred judging to perceiving. The majority (55%) of public school Resident Assistants were one of the following four Myers-Briggs types: ENFP (22%), ISTJ (13%), ENFJ (11%), and ESFJ (9%).

Of the 44 Resident Assistants from private institutions, 55% preferred extraversion to introversion, 52% preferred sensing to intuition, 50% preferred thinking and 50% preferred feeling, and 75% preferred judging to perceiving. The majority (57%) of private school Resident Assistants were one of the following five Myers-Briggs types: ISTJ (14%), ESTJ (14%), ENFJ (11%), ISFJ (9%), and INFJ (9%). For the complete breakdown of Myers-Briggs types for public and private school Resident Assistants refer to Table 18 and Table 19.

The only significant difference between public and private school Resident Assistants is on the Perceiving scale. Chi-square analysis indicated that there are significantly more Resident Assistants at public institutions that prefer Perceiving ($p > 0.05$).

Table 18: MBTI Preferences based on Type of Institution
Public School vs. Private School Resident Assistants

	Public (n=138)	Private (n=44)	χ^2
	Observed (Expected)	Observed (Expected)	
E	90 (86)	24 (28)	0.757
I	48 (52)	20 (16)	1.308
S	68 (69)	23 (22)	0.059
N	70 (69)	21 (22)	0.059
T	50 (55)	22 (17)	1.925
F	88 (83)	22 (27)	1.227
J	71 (79)	33 (25)	3.370
P	67 (59)	11 (19)	4.453*

* $p > 0.05$

Table 19: MBTI Profiles based on Type of Institution
Public School vs. Private School Resident Assistants

	Public (n=138)		Private (n=44)	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
ISTJ	18	13%	6	14%
ISFJ	7	5%	4	9%
INFJ	4	3%	4	9%
INTJ	2	1%	3	7%
ISTP	2	1%	0	0%
ISFP	5	4%	0	0%
INFP	8	6%	2	5%
INTP	1	1%	1	2%
ESTP	9	7%	1	2%
ESFP	5	4%	1	2%
ENFP	31	22%	3	7%
ENTP	7	5%	3	7%
ESTJ	9	7%	6	14%
ESFJ	13	9%	3	7%
ENFJ	15	11%	5	11%
ENTJ	2	1%	2	5%

Gender.

In order to determine if a difference existed based on gender; the data were broken down into the 101 female participants and 81 male participants. Of the 101 Resident Assistants that were female, 61% preferred extraversion to introversion, 52% preferred intuition to sensing, 71% preferred feeling to thinking, and 66% preferred judging to perceiving. The majority (58%) of female Resident Assistants were one of the following four Myers-Briggs types: ENFP (17%), ENFJ (15%), ISTJ (13%), and ESFJ (13%). Of the 81 male Resident Assistants, 64% preferred extraversion to introversion, 56% preferred intuition to sensing, 53% preferred feeling to thinking, and 54% preferred perceiving to judging. The majority (55%) of male Resident Assistants were one of the following four Myers-Briggs types: ENFP (21%), ISTJ (14%), ESTP (10%), and ESTJ (10%). The complete breakdown of Myers-Briggs types for female and male Resident Assistants is displayed in Table 20 and Table 21.

The significant difference between male and female Resident Assistants was in the Perceiving scale. There were significantly more males that preferred Perceiving ($p > 0.05$) to Judging.

Race/Ethnicity.

Respondents were given the option to identify their ethnicity as one of the following: African American/Black, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific

Table 20: MBTI Preferences based on Gender
Female vs. Male Resident Assistants

	Female (n=101)	Male (n=81)	χ^2
	Observed (Expected)	Observed (Expected)	
E	62 (63)	52 (51)	0.035
I	39 (38)	29 (30)	0.059
S	48 (47)	36 (37)	0.048
N	53 (54)	45 (44)	0.041
T	29 (37)	38 (30)	3.863
F	72 (64)	43 (51)	2.255
J	67 (58)	37 (46)	3.157
P	34 (43)	44 (35)	4.198*

* $p > 0.05$

Table 21: MBTI Profiles based on Gender
Female vs. Male Resident Assistants

	Female (n=101)		Male (n=81)	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
ISTJ	13	13%	11	14%
ISFJ	9	9%	2	2%
INFJ	5	5%	3	4%
INTJ	2	2%	3	4%
ISTP	0	0%	2	2%
ISFP	5	5%	0	0%
INFP	4	4%	6	7%
INTP	0	0%	2	2%
ESTP	2	2%	8	10%
ESFP	4	4%	2	2%
ENFP	17	17%	17	21%
ENTP	3	3%	7	9%
ESTJ	7	7%	8	10%
ESFJ	13	13%	3	4%
ENFJ	15	15%	5	6%
ENTJ	2	2%	2	2%

Islander, Caucasian/White, Latino, Latina/Hispanic, or Other. In this study, participants consisted of three ethnicities: African American/Black (50), Caucasian/White (123), and Other (9). For purposes of this research question, only the African American/Black and Caucasian/White Resident Assistants were analyzed, due to the small number of those identifying their ethnicity as Other. Of the 123 Resident Assistants who identified their race as White, 64% preferred extraversion to introversion, 50% preferred sensing and 50% preferred intuition, 55% preferred feeling to thinking, and 61% preferred judging to perceiving. The majority (61%) of White Resident Assistants were one of the five following Myers-Briggs types: ENFP (15%), ISTJ (14%), ENFJ (14%), ESTJ (9%), ESFJ (9%).

Of the 50 Resident Assistants who identified their race as Black, 58% preferred extraversion to introversion, 54% preferred intuition to sensing, 70% preferred feeling to thinking, and 54% preferred perceiving to judging. The majority (66%) of Black Resident Assistants were one of the five following Myers-Briggs types: ENFP (28%), ISTJ (14%), INFJ (8%), ISFP (8%), INFP (8%). For a more detailed breakdown of Myers-Briggs types for Resident Assistants, based on race, please refer to Table 22 and Table 23. There were no significant differences on the basis of race.

Field of Study.

The final demographic characteristic taken into consideration was the participant's field of study. For simplicity purposes, fields of study were narrowed into the following categories: Arts and Sciences, Education, Health and Human Services, Business, and

Table 22: MBTI Preferences based on Race/Ethnicity
White vs. Black Resident Assistants

	White (n=123)	Black (n=50)	χ^2
	Observed (Expected)	Observed (Expected)	
E	79 (77)	29 (31)	0.181
I	44 (46)	21 (19)	0.297
S	61 (60)	23 (24)	0.058
N	62 (63)	27 (26)	0.054
T	55 (50)	15 (20)	1.750
F	68 (73)	35 (30)	1.176
J	75 (70)	23 (28)	1.250
P	48 (53)	27 (22)	1.608

Table 23: MBTI Profiles based on Race/Ethnicity
White vs. Black Resident Assitants

	White (n=101)		Black (n=50)	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
ISTJ	17	14%	7	14%
ISFJ	10	8%	0	0%
INFJ	2	2%	4	8%
INTJ	4	3%	1	2%
ISTP	1	1%	1	2%
ISFP	1	1%	4	8%
INFP	6	5%	4	8%
INTP	2	2%	0	0%
ESTP	8	7%	2	4%
ESFP	3	2%	3	6%
ENFP	18	15%	14	28%
ENTP	9	7%	0	0%
ESTJ	11	9%	3	6%
ESFJ	11	9%	3	6%
ENFJ	17	14%	3	6%
ENTJ	3	2%	1	2%

Legal/Government work. Sixty-two Resident Assistants indicated their field of study was related to Arts and Sciences. Of these 62 Resident Assistants, 63% preferred extraversion to introversion, 61% preferred intuition to sensing, 58% preferred feeling to thinking, and 55% preferred judging to perceiving. The majority of Arts and Sciences Resident Assistants (50%) were one of the four following Myers-Briggs Types: INFP (16%), ENFP (14%), ENFJ (10%), and ESTP (10%).

Of the 65 Resident Assistants studying Education, Health and Human Services, 62% preferred extraversion to introversion, 55% preferred sensing to intuition, 74% preferred feeling to thinking, and 65% preferred judging to perceiving. The overwhelming majority (71%) of Resident Assistants studying Education, Health and Human Services were one of the five following Myers-Briggs Types: ENFP (22%), ESFJ (16%), ENFJ (11%), ISTJ (11%), and ISFJ (11%).

Of the 36 Resident Assistants studying Business, 64% preferred extraversion to introversion, 56% preferred sensing to intuition, 56% preferred feeling to thinking, and 67% preferred judging to perceiving. The majority (53%) of Resident Assistants studying business were one of the two following Myers-Briggs Types: ENFP (28%) and ISTJ (25%).

The remaining 19 Resident Assistants indicated their field of study as Legal/Government. Out of these 19, 63% preferred extraversion to introversion, 53% preferred sensing to intuition, 68% preferred thinking to feeling, and 79% preferred judging to perceiving. The overwhelming majority (73%) of Resident Assistants studying

law and government were one of the three following Myers-Briggs Types: ISTJ (26%), ENFJ (26%), and ESTJ (21%). The complete distribution of Resident Assistants based on field of study as shown in Tables 24 and 25.

The sole significant difference in any of the eight individual preferences was in the Thinking scale ($p > 0.05$). There were significantly more Thinkers than expected in the Business and Legal/Government fields of study, and significantly fewer Thinkers than expected in the Arts and Sciences and Education, Health, and Human Services fields of study.

Question 3: Is the MBTI profile of Resident Assistants significantly different than that of traditional aged college students?

The CAPT has a databank of nearly 250,000 MBTI forms separated into categories in order to provide normative data regarding MBTI types for different populations of people. All of this information is compiled into the *Atlas of Type Tables* (Macdaid, McCaulley, & Kainz, 1995). One population included in the Atlas is that of traditional age (18-25 years-old) college students, for which the data is separated into traditional age college males and traditional age college females.

According to the *Atlas* (p. 55), 60% of traditional age college females preferred extraversion, 61% preferred sensing, 68% preferred feeling, and 58% preferred judging. The majority (55%) of traditional age college women are one of the following MBTI types: ESFJ (15%), ENFP (12%), ISFJ (11%), ESTJ (9%), and ESFP (8%). In comparison is the distribution of female Resident Assistants as found in Table 26 and Table 27. The only significant difference between female Resident Assistants and

Table 24: MBTI Preferences based on Field of Study

	Arts & Sciences (n=62)	Education, Health & Human Services (n=65)	Business (n=36)	Legal/Government (n=19)	χ^2
	Observed (Expected)	Observed (Expected)	Observed (Expected)	Observed (Expected)	
E	39 (39)	40 (41)	23 (22)	12 (12)	0.069
I	23 (23)	25 (24)	13 (14)	7 (7)	0.113
S	24 (31)	36 (32)	20 (18)	10 (9)	2.444
N	38 (31)	29 (33)	16 (18)	9 (10)	2.388
T	26 (25)	17 (26)	16 (14)	13 (7)	8.584*
F	36 (37)	48 (39)	20 (22)	6 (12)	5.286
J	28 (35)	42 (37)	19 (21)	15 (11)	3.721
P	34 (27)	23 (28)	17 (15)	4 (8)	4.974

* $p > 0.05$

Table 25: MBTI Profiles based on Field of Study

	Arts & Sciences (n=62)		Education, Health & Human Services (n=65)		Business (n=36)		Legal/ Government (n=19)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
ISTJ	3	5%	7	11%	9	25%	5	26%
ISFJ	2	3%	7	11%	2	6%	0	0%
INFJ	2	3%	4	6%	2	6%	0	0%
INTJ	2	3%	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%
ISTP	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%
ISFP	1	2%	4	6%	0	0%	0	0%
INFP	10	16%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
INTP	2	3%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
ESTP	6	10%	2	3%	2	6%	0	0%
ESFP	1	2%	2	3%	3	8%	0	0%
ENFP	9	14%	14	23%	10	28%	1	5%
ENTP	5	8%	1	2%	2	6%	2	11%
ESTJ	5	8%	3	5%	3	8%	4	21%
ESFJ	5	8%	10	16%	1	3%	0	0%
ENFJ	6	10%	7	11%	2	6%	5	26%
ENTJ	2	3%	2	3%	0	0%	0	0%

Table 26: MBTI Preferences of Female Resident Assistants vs. Traditional Age College Females

	Female Resident Assistants	Traditional Age College Females	χ^2
	Observed (Expected)	Observed (Expected)	
E	62 (60)	8677 (8679)	0.067
I	39 (41)	5842 (5840)	0.098
S	48 (62)	8914 (8900)	3.183
N	53 (39)	5605 (5619)	5.061*
T	29 (32)	4615 (4612)	0.283
F	72 (69)	9904 (9907)	0.131
J	67 (58)	8371 (8380)	1.406
P	34 (43)	6148 (6139)	1.897

* $p > 0.05$

Table 27: MBTI Profiles of Female Resident Assistants vs. Traditional Age College Females

	Female Resident Assistants		Traditional Age College Females	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
ISTJ	13	13%	996	7%
ISFJ	9	9%	1665	11%
INFJ	5	5%	550	4%
INTJ	2	2%	314	2%
ISTP	0	0%	365	2%
ISFP	5	5%	834	6%
INFP	4	4%	823	6%
INTP	0	0%	304	2%
ESTP	2	2%	408	3%
ESFP	4	4%	1210	8%
ENFP	17	17%	1705	12%
ENTP	3	3%	508	4%
ESTJ	7	7%	1260	9%
ESFJ	13	13%	2185	15%
ENFJ	15	15%	932	6%
ENTJ	2	2%	469	3%

traditional aged college females was on the Intuition scale.

According to the *Atlas of Type Tables* (Macdaid, McCaulley, & Kainz, 1995, p. 61), traditional age college males are 51% Extroverted and 49% Introverted, 58% prefer sensing, 63% prefer thinking, and 51% prefer perceiving. The majority (54%) of traditional aged college males are one of the following MBTI types: ISTJ (13%), ESTJ (13%), ENTP (7%), ESTP (7%), INTP (7%), and ISTP (7%). The distribution of male Resident Assistants is displayed in Table 28 and Table 29. The difference between male Resident Assistants and traditional aged college males was significant for the Feeling scale. Significantly more male Resident Assistants than expected preferred Feeling ($p > 0.05$) as compared to traditional age college males.

Question 4: Is the MBTI profile of Resident Assistants significantly different than that of the general population?

The CAPT has descriptive data regarding the "normal" distribution of MBTI types based on over 230,000 returned MBTI forms. Based on this data, found in the *Atlas of Type Tables* (Macdaid, McCaulley, & Kainz, 1995, p. 47) the normal distribution of MBTI types is 53% Extroverted, 54% Sensing, 58%, and 57% Judging. According to the CAPT, the majority of people (56%) are one of the six following types: ENFP (11%), ESFJ (10%), ISTJ (9%), ISFJ (9%), ESTJ (9%), and INFP (8%). Tables 30 and 31 showed that there were no significant differences between the Myers-Briggs profiles of Resident Assistants and that of the general population of people.

Table 28: MBTI Preferences of Male Resident Assistants vs. Traditional Age College Males

	Male Resident Assistants	Traditional Age College Males	χ^2
	Observed (Expected)	Observed (Expected)	
E	52 (42)	6468 (6478)	2.396
I	29 (39)	6169 (6159)	2.580
S	36 (47)	7356 (7345)	2.591
N	45 (34)	5281 (5292)	3.582
T	38 (51)	8011 (7998)	3.335
F	43 (30)	4626 (4639)	5.670*
J	37 (42)	6698 (6692)	0.601
P	44 (38)	5939 (5945)	0.953

* $p > 0.05$

Table 29: MBTI Profiles of Male Resident Assistants vs. Traditional Age College Males

	Male Resident Assistants		Traditional Age College Males	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
ISTJ	11	14%	1577	13%
ISFJ	2	2%	687	5%
INFJ	3	4%	335	3%
INTJ	3	4%	683	5%
ISTP	2	2%	860	7%
ISFP	0	0%	517	4%
INFP	6	7%	672	5%
INTP	2	2%	838	7%
ESTP	8	10%	849	7%
ESFP	2	2%	557	4%
ENFP	17	21%	791	6%
ENTP	7	9%	855	7%
ESTJ	8	10%	1619	13%
ESFJ	3	4%	690	5%
ENFJ	5	6%	377	3%
ENTJ	2	2%	730	6%

Table 30: MBTI Preferences of Resident Assistants vs. General Population

	Resident Assistants	General Population	χ^2
	Observed (Expected)	Observed (Expected)	
E	114 (97)	123771 (123788)	2.982
I	68 (85)	108786 (108769)	3.403
S	89 (98)	125859 (125850)	0.827
N	93 (84)	106698 (106707)	0.965
T	72 (77)	98467 (98462)	0.325
F	110 (105)	134090 (134095)	0.238
J	104 (104)	132521 (132521)	0.000
P	78 (78)	100036 (100036)	0.000

Table 31: MBTI Profiles of Resident Assistants vs. General Population

	Resident Assistants		General Population	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
ISTJ	24	13%	21755	9%
ISFJ	11	6%	21581	9%
INFJ	8	4%	9990	4%
INTJ	5	3%	9868	4%
ISTP	2	1%	7419	3%
ISFP	5	3%	11266	5%
INFP	10	5%	17684	8%
INTP	2	1%	9223	4%
ESTP	10	5%	7154	3%
ESFP	6	3%	12718	6%
ENFP	34	19%	24472	11%
ENTP	10	5%	10100	4%
ESTJ	15	8%	21298	9%
ESFJ	16	9%	22668	10%
ENFJ	20	11%	13711	6%
ENTJ	4	2%	11650	5%

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion

The problem addressed in this study is that of the lack of research conducted regarding the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator profiles of Resident Assistants. A large amount of research and commentary exists about the MBTI; however, it has not yet reached the field of student affairs, particularly the field of Residence Life. In order to combat that problem, the purpose of this study was to determine if there is a dominant MBTI profile for Resident Assistants at three institutions of higher education in the southeast United States, and to determine if that personality profile differs based on demographic information.

In regards to the purpose of the study, the following research questions were asked:

1. What does the MBTI profile of Resident Assistants look like?
2. Is there a significant difference in MBTI profile based on demographic characteristics such as: type of institution (public versus private), gender, race, or field of study?
3. Is the MBTI profile of Resident Assistants significantly different than that of traditional aged college students?
4. Is the MBTI profile of Resident Assistants significantly different than that of the general population?

Question 1: What does the MBTI profile of a Resident Assistant look like?

Based on the data displayed in Table 7 and Table 7.1, it is evident that there is no one Myers-Briggs profile typical to a Resident Assistant. Each of the 16 profile types is represented, although, the distribution of these types is not even. Looking at the

individual dichotomies, the majority of Resident Assistants are Extroverted (63%), Intuitive (51%), Feelers (60%), and Judgers (57%), which would create the Myers-Briggs profile of ENFJ. However, the ENFJ profile only consists of 11% of the population of Resident Assistants who participated in the study. Table 7.1 shows that the top four Myers-Briggs profiles for Resident Assistants are: ENFP (19%), ISTJ (13%), ENFJ (11%), and ESFJ (9%), similarly; it shows that the bottom three profiles for Resident Assistants are: ENTJ (2%), ISTP (1%), and INTP (1%). Essentially, it is not possible to classify Resident Assistants as one particular Myers-Briggs type, based on this study. It is important to consider that although the majority of Resident Assistants may prefer a particular side of the dichotomies, that not everyone shares that preference. Preferences can vary based on several factors, including demographic characteristics, and Resident Assistants should be treated as individuals.

The fact that the distribution of Resident Assistants is not dominated by one Myers-Briggs profile is surprising. It might be reasonable to expect that Resident Assistants would tend to be Extroverted and Feeling due to the nature of the Resident Assistant position. This type of leadership position requires that staff members use each of these personality traits on a regular basis, and since supervisors often only see their staff members while they are performing their job functions, Resident Assistants are often mistaken as being more Extroverted and Feeling than they may really be. While they may express these traits while performing their job duties, it may not be their preferred trait. For example, Resident Assistants may appear to be very outgoing and energetic while

interacting with a group of residents, but they may not actually be extroverted. This process of interaction could be very tiring for them if they prefer introversion and they may need time alone to reenergize after such activities.

Question 2: Is there a significant difference in MBTI profile based on demographic characteristics such as: type of institution (public versus private), gender, race, or field of study?

Demographic characteristics such as type of institution, gender, race, and field of study can have a significant affect on the Myers-Briggs profile of a Resident Assistant. While each individual dichotomy and profile type was not found to change significantly for every change in demographics, there were some significant differences worth noting.

Type of Institution

When examining the Myers-Briggs profiles of Resident Assistants based on type of institution (public or private), as seen in Table 18 and Table 19, it was apparent that there was a significant difference with the P ($p > 0.05$) dichotomy. Closer examination shows that there were a significantly larger amount of Resident Assistants at public institutions who preferred Perceiving to Judging. This means that there were more Resident Assistants at private institutions who preferred Judging, and while the difference was not significant for the Judging scale, it was considerable and noteworthy. It is understandable that Resident Assistants at private, religiously affiliated, institutions might prefer Judging to Perceiving due to their religious commitments. It is possible that private school Resident Assistants are used to more structure and rigidity due to their religion and are therefore more comfortable with Judging than Perceiving.

When looking at the distribution of MBTI profiles, it is evident that the most common profiles for public school Resident Assistants were ENFP, ISTJ, ENFJ, and ESFJ. The most common profiles for private school Resident Assistants were ISTJ, ESTJ, ENFJ, ISFJ, and INFJ. The only similarities in the top profiles were the ISTJ and ENFJ types.

Gender

The Myers-Briggs profiles of Resident Assistants also differed based on the gender of the Resident Assistant. Table 20 and Table 21 show the complete distribution of Myers-Briggs preferences and profiles based on gender. According to these tables, male Resident Assistants were more likely to prefer Perceiving to Judging ($p > .05$). This difference was surprising, given that the Resident Assistant position description does not differ for males and females, therefore leading to the assumption that the profiles of Resident Assistants would not differ based on gender. Differences also existed with the distribution of Myers-Briggs profiles.

The most prevalent profiles types for female Resident Assistants were ENFP, ENFJ, ISTJ, and ESFJ and the most prevalent profiles for male Resident Assistants were ENFP, ISTJ, ESTP, and ESTJ. The only similarity in these top profiles is in the ENFP and ISTJ types. The lack of similarities in the most prevalent profiles suggests that there is indeed a difference in MBTI type for Resident Assistants based on gender, although that difference is not dramatic, nor is it significant.

Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity was also considered as a demographic characteristic that might have an effect on a Resident Assistant's Myers-Briggs profile. No significant differences were found within the individual dichotomies of White and Black Resident Assistants; and the distribution of MBTI profiles were not significantly different either. Although the only similarities in the most prevalent types were ENFP and ISTJ, the differences in the distribution were small. This is not surprising because the Resident Assistant position description does not differ based on the race or ethnicity of the Resident Assistant. Any significant differences in the distribution of profiles would likely be considered happenstance.

Field of Study

The final demographic information collected related to the participant's Field of Study. Due to the overwhelming number of different majors and career interest areas, participants were classified into one of the following four areas: Arts and Sciences, Education, Health and Human Services, Business, and Legal/Government work. The one significant difference found was with the individual dichotomies - in the Thinking scale. Resident Assistants studying Business or Law/Government are significantly more likely to prefer Thinking than Resident Assistants studying Arts and Sciences or Education, Health, and Human Services. Because of the nature of the Business and Law/Government positions, it is understandable that Resident Assistants with those majors would prefer Thinking over Feeling.

The differences in distribution of both the individual dichotomies and the complete profiles of Resident Assistants varied depending on the demographic characteristic being considered. While some characteristics had more significant distributions than others, each characteristic was significant in a certain way, and none were found to have completely normal distributions. For these reasons, it is reasonable to conclude that the Myers-Briggs profiles of Resident Assistants show only modest variation based on demographic characteristics.

Question 3: Is the MBTI profile of Resident Assistants significantly different than that of traditional aged college students?

The Center for Applied Psychological Type (CAPT) published a book entitled *The Atlas of Type Tables* (Macdaid, McCaulley, & Kainz, 1995) that contains normative data regarding distributions of Myers-Briggs profiles for the general population, as well as various subsets of the population. One such subset is that of Female and Males who are considered Traditional Age College Students. In comparing the distribution of profiles for Resident Assistant to that of the traditional age college students, significant differences were found.

Since the *Atlas* separated Traditional Age College Students into Female and Male, it was necessary to compare the Resident Assistant population in the same manner. In comparing female Resident Assistants to traditional age college females, one significant difference was noted. Female Resident Assistants were more likely than traditional age college females to prefer Intuition to Sensing ($p > .05$). This may be due to the abstract nature of the Resident Assistant position. Resident Assistants are often asked to serve as

peer mentors to their residents, and they are trained to look past what the individual is saying to what the underlying meaning is. For example, a resident could be doing poorly in school, but the Resident Assistant who prefers intuition may notice that it is because the person is homesick, not because they are a poor student.

The comparison of male Resident Assistants to traditional age college males yielded one significant result. Traditional age college males were much more likely than male Resident Assistants to prefer Thinking to Feeling ($p > 0.05$). It is logical that male Resident Assistants would be more likely than traditional age college males to prefer Feeling because of the level of interaction with people required by the Resident Assistant position. A male who prefers Thinking may not understand the necessity of the Resident Assistant position or why it would be their responsibility to be available to help a floor of residents.

The distribution of Myers-Briggs profiles was also interesting. There were three similarities in the most prevalent profiles for male Resident Assistants and traditional age college males: ISTJ, ESTP, and ESTJ. While these similarities do exist, the distribution for traditional age college males is much more evenly spread than that for male Resident Assistants.

Although the distribution for male Resident Assistants in comparison to traditional age college males had different variations than that of female Resident Assistants versus traditional age college females, both distributions did have some significant differences. It appears that the profile of Resident Assistants is different than that of traditional age

college students. While there were some differences between female Resident Assistants and traditional age college females, none of those differences were significant. Based on the fact that there was only one significant difference between the distributions of male Resident Assistants and traditional age college males, it is agreeable that male Resident Assistants do differ slightly from traditional age college males, based on Myers-Briggs profiles.

Question 4: Is the MBTI profile of Resident Assistants significantly different than that of the general population?

The final research question examined the possibility that there may be a significant difference in the Myers-Briggs profiles of Resident Assistants when compared to the profiles of the general population. As previously mentioned, *The Atlas of Type Tables* (Macdaid, McCaulley, & Kainz, 1995) has normative data regarding the distribution of Myers-Briggs profiles for the general population (based on scores from nearly 250,000 participants). A comparison between the distributions showed that there were no significant differences between Resident Assistants and the general population in terms of the individual dichotomies. While none of the differences were significant, the differences evident in the Extraversion/Introversion scale were approaching significant. Resident Assistants appeared to be more likely than the general population to prefer Extroversion; however, this difference was not significant. This preference for Extroversion makes sense due to the level of social interactions demanded by the Resident Assistant position. While an introvert can be equally as satisfied and successful in the position, an extrovert may enjoy the position more, or some parts of the position may come more naturally.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the results of this study showed that there is not one personality profile applicable to all Resident Assistants. While it is true that a majority of Resident Assistants may share similar preferences, each of the sixteen Myers-Briggs profiles was represented by Resident Assistants in this study. Also, it is evident that demographic characteristics have an impact on the distribution of Myers-Briggs profiles of Resident Assistants. Each of the characteristics studied displayed some significant differences based on that characteristic. Similarly, it was found that there was a difference between the Myers-Briggs profile distributions of Resident Assistants and traditional age college students. The difference was more significant for male Resident Assistants and traditional age college males, but differences were found when comparing their female counterparts as well. Finally, it was found that Resident Assistants varied only slightly from the general population, with only two of the sixteen Myers-Briggs profiles having a significant difference.

Recommendations

The findings of this study are limited in that participants were from only three institutions of higher education, all located in the southeast United States. Because of the small population considered, findings cannot be applied to Resident Assistants universally, but can be taken into consideration when looking for information regarding the personality profiles of Resident Assistants. Recommendations for future study would include the following:

1. Use samples of Resident Assistants from institutions of higher education throughout the United States. Findings from a similar study with a broader population would be applicable to the population of Resident Assistants as a whole.

2. Add more demographic characteristics to the study. For example, identify which part of the country or world the Resident Assistant is from in order to determine if geography is related to the personality profiles of Resident Assistants.

3. Include private institutions that are not religiously affiliated to the study in order to help determine if the differences between public and private institutions were due to the religious nature of the private institutions used.

4. Examine the profiles of those who are selecting Resident Assistants (professional staff in the buildings) as well as the profiles of the upper administration at the university to determine if there is a correlation between the Resident Assistants and those who are responsible for their selection as staff members.

5. Finally, analyzing the MBTI profile distributions of Resident Assistants and the general student body at the same institution would provide information on whether or not certain personality types are attracted to the Resident Assistant at a specific institution.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Dear Director of Housing/Residence Life,

I am a graduate student under the direction of Professor Grady Bogue in the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences at the University of Tennessee. I am conducting a research study regarding the personality profiles of resident assistants based on the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI).

Your participation will involve granting me the ability to administer the MBTI to the resident assistants at your institution. Completion of the MBTI and short demographic profile should take approximately 15-25 minutes. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. The results of the research study may be published, but names of resident assistants and the name of your institution will not be used.

There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts if I agree to participate in this study.

If you have any questions concerning this research study, please call myself or Dr. Grady Bogue at (865) 974-6140 or bogue@utk.edu.

Sincerely,

Laura Krouse

* * * * * * *

I give my consent to participate in the above study.

_____ (signature) _____ (date)

Appendix 2

Dear Resident Assistant,

I am a graduate student under the direction of Dr. Grady Bogue in the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences at the University of Tennessee. I am conducting a research study regarding the personality profiles of Resident Assistants based on the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI).

Your participation will involve completing the MBTI Form M and a short demographic profile, which should take approximately 15-25 minutes. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. The results of this research may be published, but names of Resident Assistants and the name of your institution will not be used. All information collected will be traced using only an identification number. By completing the attached demographic profile and MBTI Form M, you are indicating your agreement to participate in this study.

There are no foreseeable discomforts if you agree to participate in this study.

If you have any questions concerning this research study, please contact myself or Dr. Grady Bogue at (865) 974-6140 or bogue@utk.edu..

Sincerely,

Laura A. Krouse
University of Tennessee
(865) 595-7376
lkrouse@utk.edu

Vita:

Laura Ann Krouse was born in Holland, Michigan, September 4, 1983, to parents Mark and Sherry Krouse. She attended Holland Christian Schools from preschool through high school where she was a varsity athlete, a member of student council, and appeared in the musical Oliver! Upon graduation from Holland Christian High School, Laura was accepted to the Honor's College at Grand Valley State University, located in Allendale, Michigan. Throughout her undergraduate career, Laura was very involved across campus and held leadership positions in the Residence Housing Association, National Residence Hall Honorary, Michigan Organization of Residence Halls Association, and as a Resident Assistant. In April 2004, Laura graduated from the Honor's College with a Bachelor of Science in Health Science.

Following graduation, Laura traveled to Knoxville, Tennessee where she was enrolled in the College Student Personnel program at the University of Tennessee – Knoxville. In addition to her academic requirements, Laura worked as a graduate assistant for the Department of University Housing. In 2004-2005, Laura was the West Area Graduate Assistant for programming and she completed an internship with the office of Career Services. In 2005-2006, Laura was the Assistant Hall Director for Morrill Hall and completed an internship with the Safety, Environment, and Education center. Laura graduated with a Masters of Science in College Student Personnel in August 2006.