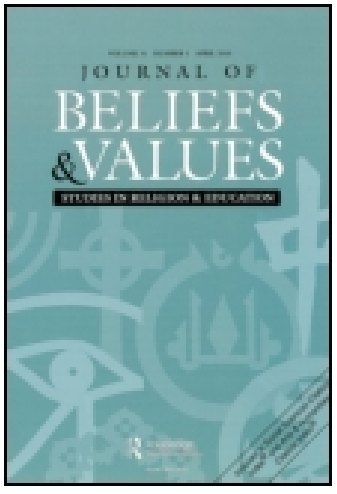

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The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® and mainstream psychology: analysis and evaluation of an unresolved hostility

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The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® and mainstream psychology: analysis and evaluation of an unresolved hostility

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The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI®) is widely used as a staff-development tool in the business and voluntary sectors. Its Psychological Type approach is found to be a valuable aid to understanding self and others and thus to enhancing effective team-working. This continuing and growing popularity is surprising in view of the disdain with which MBTI® has long been regarded by the professional psychology community. The grounds of this hostility are here examined, revealing a remarkable convergence between the conceptual frameworks of MBTI® and its more orthodox counterparts in personality psychology, as well as several significant differences. The Type and Trait approaches both conclude that there are just four principal and independent components of the normal personality, and are in close agreement in identifying these four components. The differences are principally in the different theoretical frameworks of the Type and Trait approaches. An evaluation of these differences suggests that a harmonization would be achieved if each side of the argument could relinquish one of its cherished theoretical underpinnings. Specifically the Psychological Type community should abandon its insistence that every individual is constitutionally either, for example, an Extravert or an Introvert; and advocates of the Trait approach should abandon the morally evaluative stance that, for example, Extraversion is a desirable quality which introverts sadly lack in adequate measure. The Psychological Type view of Introversion, for example, as an equally positive intrinsic quality as Extraversion is urged as less crude and more authentic.

Keywords: Myers-Briggs Type Indicator; MBTI; psychological type; five-factor model; personality trait

Introduction

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI®) is a widely used approach to the analysis of the human personality. It is a questionnaire-based instrument that sorts individuals into 16 categories, which are designated Psychological Types. The principal personality attributes of each Type are often encapsulated in descriptive prose summaries.

Departments of Human Resources in business, commercial and academic institutions worldwide value the insights of Psychological Type (PT) theory for team building and in determining organizational structures. Individuals who have been taught the principles of PT testify to its value in better understanding their own personalities and behaviour and those of their families, friends and colleagues. It so

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enhances their ability to interact fruitfully with people they recognize as significantly different from themselves that they become fervent advocates for PT. A membership organization, the Association for Psychological Type international (APTi) exists, based in the USA; and there is also a British Association for Psychological Type (BAPT) and several cognate bodies in other countries. APTi and BAPT each publish a house journal, *Bulletin of Psychological Type* and *Typeface* respectively. A scholarly journal, *Journal of Psychological Type*, publishes research on Psychological Type. There are numerous books about PT, some dealing with its underlying theory and the MBTI®, and some with specialist applications, such as personal development, health and wellbeing, relationships and the workplace.

The Christian church is another sector that values and uses MBTI®. Again PT's ability to illuminate the varieties of human personality is valuable in facilitating team-working. But here there is another dimension: understanding how an individual's personality influences the spiritual practices that prove congenial and nourishing (Duncan 1993; Fowke 1997; Goldsmith 1994; Johnson 1995; Keating 1987; McGuinness 2009). Despite the widespread enthusiasm for MBTI® in Christian circles, some Christian leaders are cautious or hostile towards it. In a previous study (Lloyd 2007) I examined these negative stances towards MBTI® and identified five strands of concern: misuse of PT in spiritual formation; PT as a simplistic analysis; PT as a restrictive pigeonholing; unethical use of PT; and the Jungian origins of PT theory. In probing each of these strands of criticism I concluded that several of them had their roots in some serious epistemological and theological issues.

The classification of human personalities into 16 Types could stand alone as a theory-free taxonomy (see Lloyd 2008). But it derives from, and its presentation is always accompanied by, a highly articulated theoretical framework that has its origins in the work of Carl Jung. In its developed form (Myers 1980; Myers et al. 2003), this theory postulates four discrete and independent components of personality, each of which comprises an axis that permits two alternative expressions. To illustrate: one of these components is the E–I axis, on which individuals are deemed to be either Extravert (E) or Introvert (I). Extraverts display a cluster of related personality features; Introverts display contrasting but cognate features. The other three axes are Sensing–Intuition (S–N), Thinking–Feeling (T–F) and Judging–Perceiving (J–P). Further detail of Psychological Type theory is given in the *Evaluation* section below.

This theory of four personality components, each permitting two alternative expressions, is the basis for the division of the range of human personalities into 16 Types. It is the basis too for the four-letter label for each. Thus my Type is INFJ (Introvert, *not* Extravert; Intuitive, *not* Sensing; Feeling, *not* Thinking; Judging, *not* Perceiving).

Despite its remarkable popularity in other spheres, the MBTI® is not well regarded by the professional psychology community. Disdain is typical, although not universal. Most textbooks on the study and analysis of human personality (Matthews, Deary, and Whiteman 2003; Mishel, Shoda, and Smith 2004; Cervone and Pervin 2008) make no mention of MBTI® or its underlying (Jungian) theory of Psychological Type. Psychology professionals who accept and use the insights of MBTI® include Martinez (2001), Francis (2005) and Sims (2009).

The starting point for the present investigation was a seminal article by McCrae and Costa (1989), reporting a detailed comparison of the MBTI®, and its theoretical underpinning, with the model of personality then (and still) dominant in mainstream

academic psychology, namely the Five-Factor (or Big-Five) Model. This model identifies five key components of human personality. These so-called *Traits* comprise four positive qualities (Extraversion, Openness [to Experience], Agreeableness and Conscientiousness) and one negative quality (Neuroticism). By means of a questionnaire, individuals are given a numerical score for each of these traits. McCrae and Costa (1989) administered both the MBTI® and the NEO-PI (an instrument designed to evaluate the Big-Five factors) to the same group of individuals and found a strikingly high degree of correlation. Extraversion measured as a trait, correlated with MBTI® Extraversion; Openness with Intuition; Agreeableness with Feeling; and Conscientiousness with Judging.

Despite demonstrating many similarities and a high level of correlation between the two approaches to the classification of personality, McCrae and Costa (1989) were critical of the Jungian theory integral to MBTI®. They concluded that MBTI® had no advantages, and some major drawbacks, and urged MBTI® practitioners 'to abandon its Jungian framework and reinterpret the MBTI in terms of the five-factor model'. This conclusion, by prominent and respected researchers, may largely explain the apparent dismissal of MBTI® from serious consideration by the professional psychology community over the past two decades.

Twenty years on, the MBTI® and Psychological Type theory still retain a massive following. This raises some intriguing questions. Are McCrea and Costa's (1989) criticisms of MBTI® less convincing than is generally understood? Is the Five-Factor model itself vulnerable to criticism? Does MBTI® perhaps possess unrecognized advantages over the Five-Factor model that more than compensate for any actual or perceived deficiencies? In exploring these issues, they are found to be very much a matter of Beliefs and Values.

Method

The foundational beliefs and values of Psychological Type are identified and examined. Each is evaluated in terms of evidence and plausibility. A similar exercise is undertaken with regard to the Five-Factor model.

In order to avoid a category error, it is important to distinguish between an explanatory theory of personality and the instruments used to probe and apply them. Thus Myers-Briggs *Type* theory is cognate with Five-Factor *Trait* theory. In the ensuing text we shall use *Type* and *Trait* as suitable abbreviations for these rival theories. Likewise the MBTI® is cognate with, for example, the NEO-PI instrument.

Analysis

We proceed now to a detailed consideration of the similarities and differences between the Type and the Trait approaches to personality.

Personality factors: 3, 4, 5 or 16?

Psychological Type theory answers 4: namely two *Attitudes* (E or I and J or P) and two *Functions* (S or N and T or F). This answer derives from Jung's own theory, with J–P added by Myers (1980).

An admirable review of the history and development of modern Personality Trait theory is provided by Cervone and Pervin (2008). The starting point was Cattell's compilation of 16 personality factors. Factor analysis later demonstrated that many of these correlated with others on the list, leading to the identification of a small number of factors that appeared independent of each other and to incorporate the features of Cattell's longer list. Eysenck proposed three super-factors: Extraversion, Neuroticism and Psychoticism. But, as noted above, it is Goldberg's Five-Factor model that has established itself as the dominant model, with the five factors Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Neuroticism.

On this issue Type and Trait theories are very close: four Type factors and five Trait factors. And as already pointed out, the four Types correlate closely with four of the Five-Factor Traits. Neuroticism, the remaining Trait, has no parallel in the PT scheme.

Qualitative or quantitative?

In the Type model, every individual is deemed to belong by nature on one side or other of a dividing line between the two polarities of each factor measured. Thus, as an INFJ, I am Introvert (and *not* Extravert), Intuitive (*not* Sensing), Feeling (*not* Thinking) and Judging (*not* Perceiving). By contrast, in the Trait model I am a low scorer on Extraversion and a high scorer on Openness, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness. Type theory distinguishes between *Reported Type*, the Type indicated by an instrument such as the MBTI®, and *True Type*, thus acknowledging that no instrument or other approach is infallible in identifying a person's Type. Individuals are always asked to confirm the validity of their Reported Type by reading prose profiles of the 16 Types and identifying the one that describes them most accurately. If both approaches indicate the same Type, the Reported Type is probably that person's True Type.

Use of the term *True Type* also indicates a belief that the dichotomies between the four polarities mirror ontological reality and probably point to some as yet unidentified neural pattern or entity. PT is not seen as an artificial construct secondary to the use of some psychological instrument.

Like the instruments used to evaluate Trait models, the MBTI® yields scores, but Type theory does not take these as measuring the intensity of an individual's Attitude or Function, but as how clearly the instrument indicates the individual's True Type. The score 'reflects the degree of confidence in the accuracy of placement of a respondent into a particular type category' (Myers et al. 2003).

This aspect of Type theory has attracted significant attention, as it is inherently testable. It is argued that if every individual is either E or I, S or N, etc., and if the MBTI® scores for EI (or SN, TF and JP) are expressed as a continuous score, then the scores for a population of individuals should be bimodally distributed, clustered around two mean values, one representing the Extraverts and one the Introverts. If, on the other hand, Extraversion/Introversion is a continuum, the EI score for a population should be unimodal, grouped around the mid-point. Several early attempts to detect bimodality in a range of data-sets produced contradictory outcomes (see Myers and McCauley 1985, 157ff). Then Harvey and Murray (1994) reported a clearly, if not sharply, bimodal distribution for EI, SN, TF and JP. However Bess and Harvey (2001) subsequently subjected another data set to a more sophisticated analysis, yielding a unimodal distribution. (The same data analysed by the earlier

method (Harvey and Murray [1994], yielded a bimodal distribution.) Commenting on the way in which the earlier data had been used by Type advocates to support Type theory, Bess and Harvey (2001) summarize their own position: 'although we do not conclude that the absence of bimodality necessarily proves that the MBTI® developers' theory-based assumptions of categorical types of personality is invalid, the absence of empirical bimodality…does indeed remove a potentially powerful line of evidence that was previously available to "type advocates" to cite in defense of their position'.

Value judgments

There is a sharp and significant contrast between Type and Trait approaches concerning the moral worth of the personality characteristics they measure. The Trait approach sees Extraversion, Agreeableness, Openness and Conscientiousness as desirable qualities, and deems low scores to indicate personality deficit. Costa and McCrea (1992) list the characteristics of the high scorer and the low scorer for each of the Five-Factor traits. In each case the adjectives used to describe the high scorers in Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness are mostly positive and affirming, whereas those for low-scorers are negative and derogatory. For example, high scorers for Agreeableness attract the following epithets: soft-hearted, good-natured, trusting, helpful, forgiving, gullible, straightforward. Low scorers are: cynical, rude, suspicious, uncooperative, vengeful, ruthless, irritable, manipulative. It is clear that in the Five-Factor model Agreeableness is seen as a valuable and attractive quality, and its deficiency as having nothing obvious to commend it.

By contrast the Type approach insists that the polar opposite expressions of the four personality components each have intrinsic value: one is not morally or functionally superior to the other. As Myers et al. (2003) explain: 'Each preference in a pair is a construct with its own legitimate content that is separate and distinct from the content of the opposite preference. Opposite preferences are not adequately described by using one or the other as the definitive criterion. For example, Introversion is not described as a lack of Extraversion.' Bayne (2005) agrees: 'Low Conscientiousness in Big Five theory is described as aimless and weak-willed whereas the broad equivalent in MBTI theory is (a) a quality in its own right (Perceiving) and (b) described in terms which are as positive as those describing the broad equivalent of high Conscientiousness (Judging).' In the language of classical genetics, these preferences are not dominant or recessive, but rather co-dominant. In Type theory Extraversion and Introversion each has its own strengths, as well as its own vulnerabilities. It is not more admirable to be Extravert than Introvert; it is different, both Attitudes conferring advantages and disadvantages. Similarly with the other polarities: Sensing and Intuition; Thinking and Feeling; Judging and Perceiving.

Evaluation

A remarkable convergence

Trait theory and Type theory are two subsets of the *nomothetic* approach to understanding human personality. Both assume that human personalities can be analyzed

into discrete identifiable elements, in the same way that many other biological characteristics can be. Rejection of any such classification, in favour of detailed study and understanding of individuals is designated the *idiographic* approach.

For much of the second half of the twentieth century the nomothetic approach elicited serious hostility from situationist social psychology. Personality profiling was deemed to assume a simple link between observable behaviour and a putative personality, ignoring the influence of circumstances on behaviour. The situationists' idiographic approach emphasized the uniqueness of each individual and saw the Trait and Type models as attempts to impose a meaningless taxonomy on a rich and diverse phenomenon. Those who take this view will reject both Trait and Type.

Krahé (1992), examining the relationship between the rival camps, concluded that 'despite its troubled history, the trait concept presents itself in remarkably good shape at the beginning of the 1990s' (41). She believed that 'consensus is now growing that personality and social psychology have indeed moved closer together' (2). This is largely because of the growing acceptance among Trait theorists that 'traits cannot be inferred directly from behavioural observation. Rather they are regarded as latent tendencies' (22). This dispositional view of traits emphasizes 'the potential instead of the actual manifestation of traits in behaviour' (22). If this change has indeed occurred among Trait theorists, it represents a significant convergence between the Trait and Type approaches. Type theory has always spoken of its polarities as preferences, recognizing that the demands of an individual's circumstances, responsibilities and moral convictions often modify behaviour from what is intrinsically preferred.

As noted earlier, the Trait and Type approaches to the analysis of normal human personality share much common ground. Given the different origins of the two schemes, in both time and methodology, it is remarkable that both should postulate a similar (5 or 4) number of key components of personality. It is little short of astonishing that the identities of the four Type components should be so similar to four of the Traits that they correlate strongly when individuals are tested with both approaches. The remaining Trait, neuroticism, is arguably different from the other four, being an aspect of abnormal psychology and therefore outside the remit of Type theory.

This remarkable convergence of the two approaches is an encouragement to believe that they have identified some fundamental truth about the human personality. They are also an encouragement to examine the divergence between the two approaches, and to seek for harmonization and resolution.

Theory-laden or theory-free

The MBTI® is based firmly on a structured theoretical framework, which is extensive and ramifying (see Myers 1980 and Myers et al. 2003 for full accounts). First there are four major, and mutually independent, components of personality: two Attitudes (or *Orientations*) and two Functions. The two Functions are named the Perceiving and the Judging Functions, and each has two opposite polarities. The preferred Perceiving Function in any individual can be either Sensing or Intuition; the preferred Judging Function can be either Thinking or Feeling. Nevertheless each person can use all of the four functions (S, N, T, F), when necessary or appropriate, but the ease with which they do so is ranked, from the Dominant and Auxiliary Functions (the two preferred Functions) to the Tertiary and Inferior Functions (the less preferred Functions).

The two Attitudes are also dichotomous. Each person is deemed to have a clear preference for Extraversion or for Introversion; and likewise for either Judging or Perceiving. The Attitudes are regarded as personality factors in their own right, and also as determinants of which of the preferred Functions is Dominant and which Auxiliary. Again, though each individual is deemed to be either E or I, J or P, he or she can deploy all four Attitudes. Thus Extraverts and Introverts will both display extraverted and introverted behaviour, depending on the requirements of a situation and conscious choices made. A significant difference is that Es are reinvigorated by prolonged extraversion, whereas Is need time out to recover from it. The Judging-Perceiving axis measures an individual's innate preference for closure: Js are comfortable with coming to decisions, whereas Ps prefer to keep options open. It is the nature of the decision and the circumstances that determine which approach is the more appropriate. Our preferences are not a reliable guide.

Type Dynamics is the name given to an extensive and detailed theory of the interactions between the eight independent preferences within an individual and of the outward expression of an individual's Type over a lifetime (see Lawrence 1993; Quenk 1993; Berens 1999; and Myers et al. 2003). For some, Lawrence (2007) for example, the fundamental feature of the Type model is its postulate of 16 *Whole Types*, rather than regarding a person's Type (e.g. INFJ) as a summary of what results when four specific preferences coexist. This approach significantly decreases the commensurability of the Type and Trait approaches. Because Type Dynamics has no parallel in the Trait approach, it is not further discussed here.

Psychological Type theory is regarded by the Type community as a coherent analysis of the human personality and one that mirrors ontological reality. It is received as such on the basis that it was proposed by Carl Jung (codified and modified by Briggs and Myers) and has proved valid and meaningful in practice over many years. Thus Type is a top-down approach.

By contrast the Trait approach is less theory-laden. Its five independent factors were identified by an empirical process (see *Analysis* above) and, although a five-factor model is currently ascendant, no absolute claims are made for this number. In describing an individual's personality, the Trait approach simply measures the degree to which each Trait is demonstrable. There is no insistence, as in Type theory, that each individual is, for example, either an Extravert or an Introvert. Extraversion is a universal personality factor; people differ simply in the extent to which it is a prominent attribute. Thus Trait is a bottom-up approach.

Advocates of the Five-Factor Trait approach regard Psychological Type's dependence on what they see as a conjectural and seemingly idiosyncratic theoretical basis as its major weakness. They could convincingly argue their stance as a simple application of Occam's Razor, the philosophical principle of parsimony that advocates not multiplying entities unnecessarily, when framing explanations of observed phenomena.

Can the Type community defend itself from this seemingly devastating analysis? They might, on a number of grounds. They could argue that the Trait approach's lack of a theoretical basis robs it of any explanatory power. In going beyond mere observation, Type theory is arguably a distinct advance over none at all. A precisely formulated theory should also give rise to practical approaches to test its validity. They could also point out that Trait theory is not wholly free from assumptions. Chief of these is the assumption that the factors measured are desirable components of personality (or undesirable in the case of Neuroticism), and that low scores indi-

cate a personality deficit. This issue will be explored more fully in the next subsection. Here we merely note that this component of the Five-Factor model does risk attracting the criticism of being unnecessarily and inappropriately theory-laden.

Nevertheless Type theory, and in particular Type Dynamics, does appear vulnerable to the charge of being too much taken on trust by its adherents, who unquestioningly accept the authority of its originators and are insufficiently interested in putting it to rigorous test. Pittenger (2005) is one of its recent critics, while Reynierse (2009) is critical of Type Dynamics, although broadly sympathetic to the Type approach. Bayne (1997), who also finds much to value in the Type approach, admits that Type Dynamics is 'largely untested…in any formal sense'.

Some defenders of Type (e.g. Lawrence 2007) insist that its theory base has been validated by research. But on examination this validation proves to be evidence of internal consistency. Validation is only achieved by a theory's repeated survival of tests that could have led to its falsification.

Dichotomous or continuous

As already noted, the Type hypothesis that every individual has a clear preference for one of each pair of polar opposite qualities (e.g. Extraversion or Introversion) led to the prediction of bimodality when the individual continuous scores of a group of people were analysed. This prediction seems not to have been borne out (see *Analysis* section above). It is regrettable that the Type community has not responded to this setback by critically re-examining its belief that the range of scores generated by the MBTI® indicates 'how clearly a respondent prefers one of the two opposite poles of a dichotomy, not how much of that pole she or he has' (Myers et al. 2003, 5). My view is that Psychological Type and the MBTI® could survive almost unscathed without that belief. It is noteworthy that practitioners who favour the Trait model, and who reject the Type model, frequently use the language of Type for ease of understanding, saying 'X is an extravert' to indicate that X scores highly for extraversion. And from the Type camp, Newman (1995a) writes: 'I have a hard time getting away from the idea that my father's scoring 29 points for Judging and 1 point for Perceiving on the MBTI means he is "just another" judging type. My experience with him over a lifetime is that he is, indeed, a "very strong" judging type' (68).

Over the past decade a further refinement of the MBTI® has been published. Designated MBTI® Step II, it subdivides each of the preference-pairs into five subsets. Thus Extraversion-Introversion is subdivided into: Ways to connect with others; Communicating feelings, thoughts and interests; Breadth and depth of personal relationships; Ways to communicate, socialize, learn; and Level and kind of energy. The Step II questionnaire contains questions to identify preferences within these subsets. Preferences in each of these subsets are considered to be independent of the others, so that one can have a high score, for example, for Breadth and depth of personal relationships (Gregarious or Intimate) and a low score for Level and kind of energy (Enthusiastic or Quiet). An overall preference, for example for Extraversion, is then a composite of five independent elements, some of which may be indicative of Introversion, tacitly undermining the notion of Extraversion (or Introversion) as a simple either–or, and apparently much more supportive of a continuous scale. The Type community seems not to have noticed this contradiction.

Different or defective

The greatest divide between the Trait and Type models of personality is their different evaluation of those qualities that the Type model designates Introversion, Sensing, Thinking and Perceiving. The Type model regards these as valuable personality components that enrich an individual's life-experience. The Trait model accords them no positive value, regarding them as merely deficiencies of the admirable and desirable qualities of Extraversion, Openness (PT's Intuition), Agreeableness (Feeling) and Conscientiousness (Judging). These contrasting evaluative stances are in both cases integral to the theory base of the model in question. Thus they are commensurable. But they cannot both be correct.

Is there any possibility of reconciling these two seemingly opposite stances? Describing Sensing and Intuition, Myers (1980) writes: 'When people prefer Sensing, they are so interested in the actuality around them that they have little attention to spare for ideas coming faintly out of nowhere. Those people who prefer Intuition are so engrossed in pursuing the possibilities it presents that they seldom look very intently at the actualities.' By contrast the low scorer (S) on the Trait evaluation of Openness (PT's Intuition) is described as *conventional, down-to-earth, narrow interests*, while the high scorer (N) is *curious, broad interests, creative original, imaginative* (Costa and McCrae 1992).

Seeking to view these two models dispassionately, it is hard to see the Trait model's evaluative stance as other than crude and crass. As Newman (1995b) writes 'here we have a robust taxonomy consisting, ostensibly, of *normal* personality traits, and yet it categorizes a significant portion of the population as *deficient*' (14).

The nuanced and affirming stance of the Type approach probably explains much of the continuing popularity of the MBTI®. If I discover I am an introvert, the Five-Factor model tells me I lack the much-to-be-desired trait of extraversion. Psychological Type tells me there are many advantages to being introverted, as well as areas of life where I may struggle. The Trait approach will leave me feeling a failure and inadequate; the Type approach will give me an affirming self-understanding that will help me.

But truth is not always palatable, and the popularity of Psychological Type is no guarantee that its analyses are correct. More convincing are the descriptions of positive value in Introversion, Sensing, Thinking and Perceiving. This is a huge area, and a few examples must suffice. Introverts are comfortable with their own company; they can concentrate on a solitary task without seeking distraction. They will concentrate on a conversation without wanting to interact at a more superficial level with a wider group. Those with a preference for Sensing are the backbone of society; they love to be competent at practical tasks; they remember a wide array of detail about how things work, where things are. A project team that includes individuals some of whom prefer Sensing is more effective than a team comprising only those who prefer Intuition; it will have the capacity to both envision and accomplish the task. Likewise with Thinking and Feeling. Some decisions require a dispassionate analysis and an ability to look beyond how affected stakeholders will react. It is equally true that many of life's decisions must be made with people's feelings in the foreground. Again a team including T and F preferences will be the most effective. And those with a preference for Perceiving can help those with a preference for Judging to avoid making premature decisions.

Another reason for seeking to affirm both polarities is that most individuals enjoy being who they are. Describing Thinking and Feeling, Myers (1980) writes: 'Both are happier and more effective in activities that call for the sort of judgements that they are better equipped to make.'

It is interesting to note the results of a research project (Childs 2004) that sought to identify the Type of a group of individuals and also the Type they would most like to be. Approximately 50% of respondents would prefer to be a Type different from their own Type. The highest *Desirability Index* was for the type ENFJ, which of course correlates with those who would score highly on the four Five-Factor Traits that mirror these Type preferences. This result indicates that high scores on the Five-Factor traits results in an attractive personality, as commonly agreed. This finding provides some explanation for the surprising decision by the Big Five-Factor theorists to describe high-scorers in such positive terms and low-scorers in such negative terms.

Newman (1995b) comments: 'The highly judgmental adjectives commonly used by FFM [Five-Factor Model] advocates sounds like throwbacks to 19th Century terms like "moral taint". Such labels do not strike me as very good means for describing human beings. Psychology has focused so much of its attention upon human deficits (Jung was certainly steeped in that tradition), that I do not think most advocates of FFM realize the import of such value-loaded labelling' (14).

Overall the Type approach seems more balanced in its judgement, seeing both potential advantages and potential disadvantages in both polarities of each preference axis. The Trait scheme could with profit be adapted by replacing the current nomenclature for the four Traits by terms that are non-evaluative. As Bayne (2005) points out, 'traits don't have to be negative at one end.'

Conclusions

The Type and Trait approaches to the understanding and analysis of human personalities are remarkably similar. They both postulate four major factors which, although given different names, denote closely similar qualities. The approaches differ in three major respects. First, Type is a top-down approach, with a strong theoretical framework embracing a number of core concepts and entities. Trait is an empirical bottom-up approach, with few core beliefs. In this the approaches are non-commensurable. The Type community needs to become more aware of the epistemic status of Psychological Type's theory base, and admit its provisionality. This is not a call for Type's theory-base to be abandoned, but a call to search for ways of testing it empirically. Advocates of Type must recognize that science has a profound distaste for any theoretical structure whose acceptance and authority depend on a respected provenance.

Secondly, the Trait approach scores an individual for each Trait on a continuous scale. Thus an individual's Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness or Conscientiousness is deemed to be high, medium or low. By contrast Type theory insists that each individual has a clear preference for one or other of the polarities, e.g. preferring Extraversion *or* Introversion. I argue that this aspect of Type theory has lost most of its credibility, first by failing to demonstrate a bimodal distribution of scores and secondly by the acceptance by the Type community of MBTI® Step II, a more detailed analysis of the four factors that sees each as a composite of 5 independent subsets.

Thirdly, Type theory sees the polar opposites (e.g. Extraversion and Introversion) as two complementary qualities, morally neutral, each with its innate strengths and vulnerabilities, and each with much intrinsic value. Trait theory sees each Trait as a desirable quality (except Neuroticism, which is seen as undesirable) and its lack as a personality deficit. The author argues that the Type approach is more authentic and corresponds better to experience, recognizing as it does the intrinsic value of Introversion, Sensing, Thinking and Perceiving, both to an individual and to society. The unjustified negativity of the Trait approach to personality analysis is offered as an explanation of the continuing popularity of the Type approach. The Trait community is urged to reconsider the validity of its negative evaluation of qualities that individuals themselves value and enjoy.

The similarities between the Type and Trait approaches to personality analysis are already very great. If each side could relinquish one of their cherished underpinnings, recognizing its innate implausibility, there would be little to distinguish the two approaches and nothing to prevent an amicable and fruitful dialogue and the final resolution of a long-standing hostility.

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