Extraversion and Occupational Choice

Is there a relationship between the trait extraversion and occupational choice?

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Abstract

The relationship between the trait extraversion and occupational choice has been investigated by many researchers around the globe for the last many decades. This research project is aimed to addresses important issues such as whether extraversion in the workplace correlates with the occupational choice, while considering personality repertoire for professional purposes, and to analyze whether individuals have been forced to take positions, which they may not usually take especially after the financial crisis of 2008.

The research undertaken critically reviews the research / literature completed in the last many years, before discussing ethical issues surrounding the collection of primary data and the reasoning behind creating a survey. This is then followed by discussion / conclusions that help us understand how occupational choice and extraversion trait may have a correlation.

In order to achieve the aim of this research project an extensive primary as well as secondary research is conducted in this paper. The analysis technique for the results of the questionnaire was to categorize occupations and analyze the obtained corresponding extraversion scores. The data obtained was utilized to undertake detailed analyses of the impact of extraversion on a professionals or their career choice.

From this research, it was observed that there was no definite link with trait of extraversion of occupational choice with the financial crisis, as per the limited cases studied of a single organization. It was also observed that the job satisfaction has direct relation with the career choice and the personnel with certain traits eventually find their right profession. It is difficult to categories skilled introverts and shy extroverts and although majority of the occupations investigated show extraversion but the occupations such as sale marketing etc. requires high levels extraversion.
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Chapter 1; —Introduction

Occupational work constitutes of approximately half of waking life of an average human adult. Extensive research has been conducted regarding occupational patterns, choice, satisfaction and performance. Occupational success is directly related to occupational choice which further depends on personal traits and interests (Staw & Ross, 1985). An individual’s choice of occupation constitutes a significant part of an individual’s life (Losocco & Roschelle, 1991).

Personality trait and occupational choice is a matter of constant study and has provoked a great deal of speculation among psychologists and human behavior analysts. It is widely believed that achievements can be attributed to features such as individual initiative, hard work, sociability and strong will and excellency. In this scenario, personality plays a significant role in shaping the type of career or occupation opted by an individual and how he performs in his professional life.

This research project was undertaken to gain a better understanding of employment psychology specifically related to extraversion and occupation. In 2008 a financial crisis hit the world in which a lot of people were left jobless with no income source, followed by harsh recession (Grigoriev & Salikhov, 2008.). The main issue that stirred this research project was to investigate the observation that individuals might end up accepting positions or occupations that they may not normally take or which may not suit their personality type in order to beat unemployment.

It has been a matter of constant study and research by vocational psychologists to correlate the extravert personality trait with carrier decidedness and occupational options. The pattern has already been a constant exploration by psychologists and social behavior analysts and this
paper only adds value to the already present work. It is necessary to testify the results suggested by past research, examine the patterns and support the most repeatedly occurring outcomes. Moreover, many questions are raised in this research, that are previously unanswered or poorly answered due to incomplete data and issues with the honesty and authenticity of participants.

Already existing research data is updated in this research project acknowledging the fact that an up-to-date data evidence supports better reasoning and holds more credibility than data obtained by a, for example, year old research. This project also explains why (if any) individuals were forced to take up positions that they may not normally take due to the financial crisis.

This work is inspired from the lack of research done specifically on the occupational choices for extraverts. It has been argued in Habits of the Heart by Bellah et al. (1985) that humans can have three kinds of relationships with the work they do: jobs, occupations, and calling (see also Schwartz, 1986, 1994). The reason why they have been made distinct from each other is the motivation and intention behind each. Jobs are usually for earning a living, when the person is only concerned in substantial benefits out it. The only motivation is seeking any sort of reward from the work. Job is merely a duty that makes the worker able to earn a living to sustain life away from work.

The interests and ambitions of job holders are not depicted by their work. Meanwhile, people with occupation have a deep connection with the work they do and are not only interested in monetary gains but in advancement within the occupational hierarchy. As an individual goes high in occupational ladder, he gains higher social standing, increased power within a certain domain, and elevated self-esteem (Bellah et al., 1985, p. 66). Calling is a very interesting relationship of a person with the work he does. The work is not done to earn a living or Career
advancement, instead it is done for the fulfillment that working bring within the individual. Most of the calling people do is for social value, pleasure, trust, humanity and harmony.

In order to apprehend the research topic a deep understanding must be developed of authors such as Myer and Briggs and Buss (2008) as they try to explain what a trait is and why it should matter. Traits of an extravert are explained by Myers and McCaulley (1985) and Spoto (1989) whereas Dunn, Mount, Barrick, & Ones, 1995 outline why personality traits such as extraversion are important in the workplace. Barrick et al. (2001) and Holland (1996) explain the differences between an introvert and an extrovert in the workplace. All of the study done under this paper suggests that there should be a relationship between extravert behavior and occupational choice.

Whilst Rosse, Stecher, Miller, & Levin (1998) pointed out that results may be misleading due to false answers from the participants. Murphy and Dzweczynski (2005) have claimed that there is weak link between personality type questionnaires and occupation psychology. However, [Bayne, 1995] criticized that questionnaires often judge how the participant is answering the questionnaire and not how the participant acts in real life situations. All of these authors criticize the link between extraversion and occupational choice that may not exist.

In addition, authors such as Eve Carl Jung(1971), Ted (2012) raised important points regarding the theory that an extreme introvert or extreme introvert does not exist in real life. Another important aspect to consider comes from Gebler (1969) as well as Brian Little’s ted x talks (2014) both suggesting that humans have different characteristics to choose from depending on the situation. An interesting point was raised by Jemal (1991) suggesting that shy extraverts and socially skilled introverts exist. All of these theories suggest that personality is not a black and white topic and that the results may sometimes not what they appear to be.
Structure of Research

In this research, participants were emailed the survey questionnaire. This research strategy is not only convenient for both, participant and researcher, but it is also known to be producing the most results. Participants do not have to set aside long period of time waiting to be surveyed and answering questions. The limitation of this strategy seen so far is possibly the lack of in-depth research.

For this research, it was important to begin from the notion that personality plays a significant role on performance related to work. It has also been proved through previous research that personality traits can strongly determine a persons’ career and occupational performance. However, it was important to examine how a person is attracted to certain occupations by both their behavior and nature as well as their performance in a certain way that leads to the employers to assign them tasks that they are most likely to do. Personality also determines a person’s enactment at a job which may lead to a higher post, compensation, promotion, increment of any sort etc. a person can also get a notable lead of role as well as exceptional knowledge with more visibility in the organization. These entire factors combine together to form extrinsic as well as intrinsic feature a person comes across during an occupation. Now if the occupation is up to the nature of an individual, he will perform exceptionally well and overcomes all hinders he would face. This is regarded as the occupational success whereby person is neither physically nor mentally tired from the routine occupational work.

The research project begins with the literature review which covers why personality matters in the workplace, what is extraversion and how it is relevant or irrelevant in the workplace according to authors and previous study on these subjects. It is followed by the methodology of the project which briefs on the research approach adapted and execution as well as analysis of research ethics. Next chapter discusses the limitations and threats to reliability and validity.
of results which is followed by result section that gives an in-depth analysis of the results and relates them to the proposed hypothesis. Discussion and conclusion is the last and final chapter of this research paper and openly discussed the results and outcomes and concludes the study made in this research.
Chapter 2; — Critical Review of the Literature

Career and Career Choice

The word ‘career’ was conventionally used for a single occupation and paid employment but in the modern era it is seen as a more dynamic lingo whereby it is thought of as a continual process of learning and development (Zaidi & Iqbal, 2011). Hence, keeping in perspective our ever changing environment and work demands, ‘career’ can be defined as constantly moving ahead in the journey of life and bettering in knowledge and experience while progressing in maturity and responsibility (Baruch, 2006) or the pattern of occupational understanding over the lifetime (Dessler, 2009). This shows that career choices have a great impact on the process of self-discovery and self-assessment (Hall, 1976) which reveals a person’s aims, desires, traits and interests (Hall, 1976: Ch.2).

The Impact of Personality in the Workplace

According to Rothestein & Goffin (2000) the personality inventories play highly influential role in the workplace. According to the research completed by Dunn et al., Personality matters in occupation because:

‘Managers care about personality, research has shown that managers weight individual personality characteristics as if they were nearly as important as general mental ability, during the hiring decision’

(Dunn, Mount, Barrick, & Ones, 1995).

According to authors such as Myers and Briggs on the type indicator theory personality is made of traits.
There is evidence that people make trait inferences about others in something of an automatic fashion, even when not specifically instructed to evaluate the other person’


In calculating general life satisfaction, choice of right occupation accounts for 20% of discrepancy in the entire measurement (Campbell, Converse, & Rodgers, 1976). Right occupation choice plays a vital part in life quality and hence has a defining impact on life stress and health conditions (Adler & Matthews, 1994). This strongly suggests that personality traits and characteristics play an important role in determining the occupational and hence life impacting features for a person (Staw, Bell, & Clausen, 1986; Staw & Ross, 1985). Humans work according to their traits and personalities (Hackman & Oldham, 1980; Hulin & Blood, 1968; Schneider, 1983) and keeping this in view, it can be deduced that people naturally good at something will likely to perform well in a job related to their nature. Individuals differ in their personalities, habits and interests and this must be kept in mind while choosing a job or occupation.

What is Trait? Defining the Trait Theory

Buss (2008) describes a trait as something that has hidden properties and causes a person’s behavior. Whilst Bayne (1995) describes it using an example:

‘...while we can use our non-preferred hand, generally we don’t and if we do, it takes more concentration and effort and is therefore more tiring and harder to sustain’.

This theory explains that traits should flow naturally; if the individual forces a trait it will automatically require more effort and hence falls out of the category of a trait. To understand traits, it must be first understood that trait psychology such as the Myer Brigg type indicator relies on the following three assumptions (Buss, 2008):
1. Meaningful individual differences
2. Stability or consistency over time
3. Consistency across situations

Defining the Extraversion trait

From the literature reviewed, it has been observed that extroversion can be defined as the measures of how sociable or unsociable one’s personality is. Myers and McCaulley 1985 describe extraversion as the need to act upon one’s environment. That is to interact and expand into it. Whilst Eysenck & Eysenck 1975, have researched that ‘extraverts typically like parties, have many friends, and seem to require having people around them to talk to’, Spoto 1989 describes introverts as wanting to be inside their world, retracting and enjoying peace. Below is a table describing typical extrovert and introvert behavior (Bayne, 1988B)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extraversion:</th>
<th>Introversion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prefer the ‘outer world’ of people and things to reflection</td>
<td>Preference reflection and the ‘inner world’ of action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>Prefer writing to talking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain energy from others</td>
<td>May enjoy social contact but need to recover from it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Want to experience things in order to understand them</td>
<td>Want to understand something before trying it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work by trial and error</td>
<td>Persistent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like variety</td>
<td>Like quite space to work in</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Brian, 2014 (little ted x talks) explains that a part of the brain, called the neo cortex, is responsible for thinking before actions. However for the neo cortex to work properly there is the median optimum level of arousal. Extraverts may behave in the typical extraverted way as their arousal level is below the median optimum level. Therefore they need to stimulate
themselves to reach that level and perform day to day tasks. Introverts are over aroused and therefore in order to achieve the optimum level of arousal they must get the level of stimulation down.

Extraversion is one of the five personality traits of the big five personality theory. Extraverts enjoy being with people, participating in social gatherings, and are full of energy. A person low in extraversion is less outgoing and is more comfortable working by him. (Ashton, 1998). Individuals high in extraversion on a career test have a tendency to seek out the company and provocation of other people. They enjoy engaging with the external world. These individuals thrive on excitement, and are enthusiastic, action-oriented people. They like to be the center of attention in groups (Guay et al. 2006).

Each of the Big Five personality traits is made up of six aspects or sub traits. These can be evaluated independently of the trait that they belong to in a personality test. The sub traits of the extraversion domain are:

- Friendliness
- Gregariousness
- Assertiveness
- Activity level
- Excitement-seeking
- Cheerfulness

It is significant to discuss that none of us are extremes of either introversion or extraversion, Eve Carl Jung (1971), the psychologist who first popularized these terms, supposed that there's no such thing as a pure introvert or a pure extrovert. The researcher concluded that such a man would be in a lunatic asylum, if he existed at all. Ted (2012). Whilst Myer and Briggs type
indicator has been a real move forward in the world of psychology, Eve Carl Jung (1971) suggests that the extremes of an extravert may not actually exist in real life and that we must try to interpret a person’s extraversion trait as humanly as possible.

The Relevance of Extraversion trait in Occupation

Personality psychology may become irrelevant in cases of high unemployment in which case individuals may be forced to take roles which they may not usually accept or which may not be suitable to their personality types. Such crisis as the 2008 financial crisis would prove the extraversion trait irrelevant to occupation if individuals needed to accept certain positions for survival purposes (Muellbauer, 2009).

However it is important to consider that introverts and extroverts may work differently in the workplace. Introverts generally prefer solitude and working on tasks individually. ‘They tend to be very careful, much less likely to take outsize risks’ – ted, 2012. If they are appointed to leadership roles they tend to let the employees have their own ideas and protect their interests (Tett & Guterman, 2000). Therefore we may argue that introverts would choose an occupational choice that would meet those needs and let them perform according to their best ability.

Since extroverts prefer working with others and enjoying the social contact, it is more important for particular occupations. ‘Extraversion has been found to be related to job performance in occupations where a significant portion of the job involves interacting with others, particularly when that interaction is focused on influencing others and obtaining status and power’ (Barrick et al., 2001). ‘They prefer activities and occupations involving manipulating, directing, or leading others to attain organizational goals and see themselves as possessing persuasion and sales abilities ‘(Holland, 1996).
Different jobs require different levels of extraversion. A high level of extraversion may be useful for jobs that require a great deal of interaction with other people, like public relations, teaching, and sales (Tango & Dziuban, 1984). Positions that are more focused on working independently and alone may be more suited to individuals with a lower level of extraversion. Personality also influences how people arrange their work areas (Lounsbury, Tatum, et al., 1999). In general, extraverts decorate their offices more, keep their doors open, keep extra chairs nearby, and are more likely to put dishes of candy on their desks. These are attempts to invite co-workers and encourage interactions (DeFruyt, et al., 2002).

Evidence also indicates that extraverts have more friends and spend more time in social situations than do introverts and, because of their social facility, are likely to find interpersonal interactions (such as those that occur at work) more rewarding (Watson & Clark, 1997). All of these authors suggest a strong link in the personality trait extraversion and job performance or occupation that they have discovered through their own individual studies.

We may also argue that due to the increased popularity in personality tests used during the interview process (Rothstein & Goffin, 2000) the occupation chooses the individual. Newman & Uleman (1989) have researched that a person/interviewer judges an interviewee's traits subliminally. Therefore without conscious thought the interviewer would pick a person who is more suitable to the traits required of the role. For example: someone in cold call sales business would need to be a sociable person due to the high nature of socializing skills required and the interviewer may automatically pick up those traits and hire the suitable candidate. Hence in most of the cases, an occupation finds the individual fit for the job.

Collectively, extroversion is absolutely associated with real career success. Extroversion is closely linked to positive flexibility (also known as positive affectivity), which in turn expresses itself in positive moods, more social activity, and terrific fruitful communal
experiences, as mentioned by Watson and Clark. Meta-analytic proof reveals that extroverts report higher levels of job (Judge et al., 2002) and life (DeNeve & Cooper, 1998) contentment. (Boudreau et al. 2001) It was found that both American and European extroverts reported higher levels of career satisfaction. (Seibert and Kraimer 2001).

From the literature reviewed, it was also found that extroversion positively foresees career satisfaction but at the same time it does not define the career success whatsoever. Bozionelos in 2004 suggested that extroversion failed to predict emotional career success and it does not equate talent. Thus, in common, it came into sight that extroversion is positively related to basic career success, though the results are not fully constant. Extroversion and its facts appear to be positively related to exterior career success. Rawls and Rawls in 1968 found that measures of supremacy and sociability discriminated successful and unsuccessful administrators when salary and job title were thought-out as symbol of success.

Extroversion was also predictive of salary and job level in two recent studies organized in the United Kingdom (Melamed, 1996a, 1996b). Well-controlled length wise studies also have supported a link between extroversion and extrinsic success. For instance, Caspi, Elder, and Bem (1988) found that childhood score of meekness was negatively related with grown-up employment rank. Similarly, Howard and Bray in 1994 noted that dominance (a characteristic of extroverts, Watson & Clark, 1997) was comparable with administrative progress. Harrell and Alpert in 1989 found that sociability was positively, though not strongly, compare with earnings 20 years after the characteristic was measured.

Research completed by Seibert and Kraimer in the year 2001 found that extroversion positively predicted earnings and advancements. Similarly, Melamed in 1996a suggested that extroversion was positively correlated with respective payment for work and managerial level for men but not for women. Bozionelos in 2004, extroversion failed to predict fair career
achievement. Thus, extroversion tends to be positively related to intrinsic as well as extrinsic career success. The results are not totally consistent, as one would anticipate based on data from diversified samples. However, the majority of the evidence suggests that extroverts are more extrinsically successful in their careers and more satisfied with them as well.

**The Impact of Extraversion in Occupation Choice, is it Relevant?**

Reviewing the literature written so far regarding occupational choice and the extraversion trait, it was observed that there are clearly some limitations which must be kept in perspective while conducting the research (Cattell and Mead, 2008). Whilst the literature is very useful for expertise and theory knowledge, it was observed that studies around personality and occupation may mislead or reflect a biased analogy due to the difficulties such as categorizing individuals into an extravert or introvert box, as well as keeping in mind that individuals may forge results if they see it to be beneficial in order to get ahead in career or other aspects of life.

Another aspect which must be understood is that personality questionnaires are still underdeveloped and are very difficult to use in the real world, as participants are marked on answering a questionnaire and not how they may actually live and feel in life (Ackerman and Beier, 2003). Observations make it clear that there is a gap in the literature and that there is very little written about occupational choice and extraversion trait.

Murphy and Dziewczynski (2004) also validated this observation on their research: ‘the validity of measures of broad personality traits is still low, personality tests used in organizations are still poorly chosen, and links between personality and jobs are inadequately understood ‘. This implies that a lot of occupation/trait literature may be misleading in over exaggerating the links between personality and occupation (Roberts and Robins, 2000). It is extremely difficult to categorize an individual’s personality since there is no cut off point of when a person becomes extraverted or introverted in their score, therefore the studies such as
Myer Briggs theory or any other personality related studies may struggle with categorization of what an individual actually leans towards in terms of extravert trait.

Also, there has been research by authors such as Rosse, Stecher, Miller, & Levin (1998) suggesting that if employees think they will gain from having a certain result, they may be dishonest about their actual personality, proving the results invalid. Personality questionnaires depends or measures what results people put in the questionnaire and not their behaviors in real life (Bayne, 1995). Therefore developing a link / connection between occupational choice and extravert trait, more often, can prove to be weak.

Brian, 2014 (Little ted x talks) also suggest that being human, we all behave differently depending on the situation and that we have a repertoire of personalities to choose from. It suggested that an introvert may become a pseudo extrovert to allow himself to perform well at work or home situations. Another example of this comes from Gebler (1969) ‘Most men spend their lives pretending to be someone else. A bank manager could hardly be said to be truly himself. He’s trapped in somebody else’s clothes. He says ‘I’ll attend to your needs immediately MR Profit’. When he is longing to leap over the counter and defecate on his head’.

However Brian (2014) also suggests that this does not come without a payoff, an introvert may need to come back to his optimal level of arousal through spending more solitary time to recover from mimicking extravert qualities. This links in to the Bayne (1995) theory of personality traits which states that feeling natural and mimicking a personality trait is unnatural and tiring. This may suggest that while we have more introvert or extrovert qualities, we may be able to switch from one to another to improve or get the occupational role that we desire or like to keep.
Another area which we must consider during assessing whether there is a link/connection between occupational choice and the extraversion trait is that there are shy extraverts and skilled introverts. Jemal (1991) tested two ideas from Rowe (1989) and found that her group of six shy extraverts, compared to ten non shy extraverts, reported more serious ‘bad experiences’ during childhood (a possible cause shy extraversion) but did not create groups of ‘imaginary friends’ (a possible side effect) about shy extraverts and skilled introverts (Bayne, 1995). This means that extraverts, who are shy, may present the qualities of an introvert and a skilled introvert may present the qualities of an extrovert. This would mean that the literature results may be misleading or invalid about its definition of extravert.

A completely unbiased score is required for this study which is assumed but never guaranteed. This means a lot of data outcomes discussed in this study related to the occupational decidedness of an extravert personality may not hold true because they are based on slightly over or under exaggerated data. All of the self-rating may therefore lead to wrong categorizing of a person as extravert which further bring us to questioning the legitimacy of data resulting from poor self-judgment and poor-self-image. A self-claimed introvert or extravert never leads to development of a credible relationship. (McAdams, 2009).
Chapter 3; — Methodology and Data

In order to achieve the aim of this research project, i.e. finding a correlation between the trait of extraversion and occupational choice, an extensive research is conducted. Research, according to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007) is defined as ‘something that people undertake in order to find things out in a systematic way, thereby increasing their knowledge”. The nature of the research requires human participants and this research would not have been able to exist without participants.

The type of study that is required to be conducted for this proposed idea is a cross in between explanatory an exploratory study. An exploratory study seeks to find out ‘what is happening; to seek new insights; to ask questions and assess phenomena in a new light’ (Robson, 2002 ref from Saunders, 2007). Explanatory study, on the other hand, seeks to find a relationship between two variables which, in this case, are the extraversion trait and occupation. The reason that this research in between the two is because there is some existing literature around occupation and extraversion trait, however it is not detailed to truly understand whether an individual who is extraverted is more attracted to a particular role.

Buchanan et al (1988) stated ‘we have been most successful where we have a friend, relative or student working in the organization’ in regards to gaining access to conduct research. Therefore in relation to this research the location has been the company Synthesio, due to current work commitments and an access to this organization. For an individual researcher it is extremely difficult to gain insider access in a company that one does not currently work for, therefore for the sake of the research project we have used the existing relationships in the work place to allow access for this research to take place. This also means that the sampling method
falls into cluster sampling, that is when the population have one aspect in common such as the company they work for but other variables are different (Walliman, 2003).

The research method chosen is survey through questionnaire. This methodology was believed to be the most appropriate research method due to the datum that it may avoid the internal biasness, as well as being the most convenient and reliable method to gain voluntary responses from participants (Walliman, 2003). Surveys usually focus on mainly quantitative data, however whilst designing the survey, it seemed appropriate to leave ‘comment’ section after each question. This allowed for additional comments or any information that the participants wished to disclose that was not part of the survey questions. The comment section proved to be useful for the study.

The design of the questionnaire was inspired by a number of sources, the Myer Briggs type theory as well as standard personality scales. The objective behind the design of the questionnaire was identify which of the occupations within Synthesio the individuals work for, and develop understanding on how extraverted or introverted they are in those occupational categories. It was important that extraversion measures were not clustered as even the smallest difference in scores in personality psychology matters.

The questionnaire includes quite a few questions regarding personal time and social relations, as these are often clues on to how extraverted or introverted an individual is. It was important that the questionnaire included a numeric measure in terms of extraversion trait as this would better allow interpretation of results. The detailed of the questionnaire are included in the Appendix section of this paper.

For general purposes the questionnaire also includes questions such as ‘If given a choice, which position within Synthesio do you feel would suit you better?’ This was to try to understand whether the current occupation that the participant is in was actually chosen by the participant
or whether if they had a chance they would move. Another interesting question which is included in the questionnaire is how the participant thinks others would rate them in the extraversion scale. This is an attempt to try to understand whether participants mimic more extrovert or introvert qualities in their current occupation or lives, as referred to by Brian Little ted x talk (2014) and Gebler (1969).

**Research Ethics:**

It is important that the research project reflects ethics through preparation. Research ethics refer to the ‘appropriateness of your behavior in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of your work and are affected by it’. Blumberg et al (2005). This affects the creation of questionnaires, the usage of data, processes and storage of data. The research ethics view that has been chosen for this research paper is the deontological view. This view ensures that there would be no deception whilst acquiring data, even if it is needed. Also that it is not justifiable to mislead participants into giving answers or participating (Saunders et al, 2007).

In the creation process of the questionnaire code of conduct provided by Birkbeck must be kept in consideration. It states that the participants will voluntary take part in the questionnaire and they will be fully aware of the research that the results will be used for, as well as ensures that participants understand that they can exit at any time whilst participating in the questionnaire. This code was met at all times during this research.

Whilst gaining access to Synthesio’s employees, it was ensured that Synthesio managers / team leads knew what the research entailed, where that data would be used and that participation would be absolutely voluntary. This is especially important because of the informed consent theory, which explains that full consent can only be achieved if the individual is making a fully informed decision (Saunders et al 2007). Access was gained through being an employee and getting approval from Synthesio bosses and HR staff.
Whilst designing the questionnaire ethical issues such as misleading questions, inappropriate terms and ease of use were also considered. These issues may be very basic, however can ruin results and reputation. If participants find the terms used offensive, they may not complete the questionnaire or even tell colleagues which would prevent them from completing it too.

As the questionnaire was MS word based/processed, the HR personnel sent out an email with a link outlining the research project purposes, anonymity, right of withdrawal and contact details for any questions. It was important for the participant to understand that participation was absolutely voluntary and that individual results would not be seen by Synthesio. Please see appendix 2 for the full email.

Furthermore, as suggested by Saunders et al (2007), it was felt important to include a form of consent, this would ensure the participants’ full consent through first clicking on the link which was sent via email, and second through clicking ‘next’ on the survey. This strategy was undertaken to ensure complete consent of the participants. Below is the informed consent form before starting the questionnaire:

‘The aim of this research questionnaire is to understand whether there is a link between extraversion and occupational choice. By clicking ‘next’ you agree to be a participant in this anonymous survey and that your results will be used for research purposes. However you are free to exit or skip a question at any time. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me on ieva@synthesio.com. Thank you for your participation.’

The safe guarding of the results is just as important as gaining full consent; any leaks of data that do not have the anonymity qualities, would result in the breach of the deontological view and therefore the data would no longer be usable. Wells, 1994 recognizes that ‘it may be difficult to maintain the assurances that have been given. However it is vital to attempt to ensure
that these are maintained’. Throughout this research, it was ensured that all the assurances were fully maintained.

**Analysis Technique:**

The analysis technique for the results of the questionnaire was to separate the participants into the groups of occupation that they are currently at, and finding out the average score of all the participants within the occupation in their extraversion scores. This allowed the researcher to contrast and compare the average scores over all occupations and therefore observe whether there is a difference between different occupations and the average extraversion scores.

The results obtained were then used to work out the average score for participant’s extraversion scale of how others rate them vs. occupation. This allowed to present whether indeed the existence of faking extraversion or introversion can be a bias in the questionnaire.

Whilst this may not be a perfect technique, it did provide an opportunity to analyze whether there is indeed a correlation between the occupational choice and the rate of extraversion.

No technique in psychology is perfect and all of the methods have their limitations owing to the fact that human beings are used in the analysis. The comments, suggestions, rating and answers provided by the participants may or may not depict their actually behavior or may be an outcome of a mere disposition. The detailed limitation of the research completed are outlined in the section below;

**Limitations:**

As mentioned in the literature review there may be many limitations to researching around personality traits, which is the prime focus of this research. As Murphy and Dzieweczynski, 2004 discussed, the overall validity of these personality questionnaires is still low. There may be very little link between personality and occupational choice in general.
Limitations of this research method and the way it is conducted can be argued upon a number of factors and basis. It is important to keep in mind that methodological limitations can never be completely eliminated in a psychology based thesis and research. Some of the questions presented in the questionnaire are likely to be more reliable than the others. However, the participants were expected to show full honesty and righteousness whilst completing the survey.

 Whilst Rosse, Stecher, Miller, & Levin, 1998 have also pointed out that generally people can manipulate / mislead on questionnaires. This is another limitation, which this questionnaire and research paper may face. The participants may be bored or disinterested or even they might have not read the questions properly. Another reason why participants may have not responded correctly on the questionnaire is that they may not actually be aware of their actual true traits.

According to the literature reviewed (Brain, 2014) often individuals go years acting more introverted or extroverted because of their environment without actual realization that they are indeed being false to their natural instinct.

Jemal’s(1991) research also points out that there are such individuals which are shy extraverts or socially skilled introverts, whilst this research attempts to get behind that by asking for a score rating of what other’s would rate the participant and what the participant rates themselves, there is still a high threat to this bias.

The methodology adopted in this paper (through questionnaire) may also be unintentionally misleading, whilst it has been tested before asking for participation. A human researcher can make mistakes and produce a leading questionnaire, which may affect the results.’

As well as that a questionnaire may be too simplistic to assess personality (Saunders et al, 2007). 10-15 questions in a questionnaire may not be enough to understand whether a person is more lenient to the extraversion or introversion trait. Personality is extremely broad in reality
and we may actually have many traits to choose from in different situations. A questionnaire does not provide in-depth answers or psychological observations.

This research paper discloses the link between extraversion trait and occupational choice based on the fact that there was a difference in rating between the participant rating him and how others would rate him. An interesting unexpected aspect that also emerged is that participants may in fact be choosing how extraverted they should be in the workplace. There was a clear difference of participants scoring themselves higher when asked how their friends would rate them. However the correlation is not strong enough to be able to say this is the case definitely. Also it may just mean that the participants feel in a more social mood whilst being around others.

A basic question surely arises in the mind of a common man regarding the suitability of gathering data from employees about their job choices and satisfaction. The employees may fear the results analyzed by their bosses and the prospect of their current job due to it. This may lead an employee survey participant to lie or misrepresent the truth. However, this fear is clarified in the email sent to the participants prior to the survey to obtain an accurate response that depicts the true essence and hence an effective and efficient conclusion is made regarding the relationship between extrovert personality and occupational choices. But yet, this research does not guarantee 100 percent accurate results regarding the topic under consideration.
Chapter 4; — Analysis and Results

As discussed previously, the analysis technique for the results of the questionnaire is to separate the participants into the groups and finding extraversion scores. This way, confusing and aggregation of data which could be overwhelming can be avoided. Analysis were completed based on figures and score using rating technique. Psychology suggests that humans are more comfortable in giving their feelings a rating on a scale because that would save the trouble to explaining which also sometimes leads to confusion because of the misinterpretation or sometimes even the feelings are wrongly described. This usually happens with personnel belonging to professions where talking or expressing themselves in not one of their major point. This method correlated the extravert behaviour with job performance, satisfaction and of course choice.

Results: Primary Research

The participants were requested to rate themselves on an extraversion scale from 1-10 against their occupation. Of course 1 and 10 would be absolute extremes of introverts and extraverts respectively. Therefore the graph below showcasing the result does not include a score of 10 or 1 for that matter. No one is, or at least believes to be, a complete introvert or extravert.

From observations we can try to understand the relationship between the extraversion trait and occupational choice. Whilst it may not be clear why there are differences in the extraversion scale, there are clear differences. A position such as finance only scores an average extraversion rate of 5; which is well below the average mean score of all results of self-rated extraversion level of 6.4, as shown in the figure below;
Whilst a position such as sourcing, which requires immense amount of socializing scored a very high 8.5. Sourcing involves cold calling prospective new clients to sell the Synthesio product. What is more interesting, is that through observation we can see that sales is also one of the highest rated extraversion levels, also above the average added mean score of all participants.

Analyzing the response of the participants in the figure 1, it can be observed that the occupational positions that do not require as much social interaction do indeed have a lower score of average extraversion. This can be supported by the average rating of a person in Insights. Insights is a position that requires solitary work on producing reports for a client predicting the future of a product or organization. On the other hand, finance requires minimum social contact / interaction at all times because the accounting department is within Synthesio.

The results outlined below is the average added results for participants in relation to the question of ‘how would others rate you on the scale of extraversion?’
From the result obtained in the figure 2 above, it can be observed that there are clear differences in the rating of extraversion. The average score added together has been increased up to a 7.02 which, interestingly enough, once again only puts sales and sourcing above the mean average of all the scores added together. Whilst areas such as finance and sourcing have remained the same score we can still see a clear pattern, which suggests that there is a correlation between the occupational choice and extraversion. This indication through survey indicated that we are leading in the right direction. But this is not yet the end, we still have to compare and contrast more questions and keep our observation at judge in deciding.

We have found that there is some correlation between the occupational choice and extraversion. However, to have a more in-depth analysis on the differences between how participants scored whilst scoring themselves and whilst being asked how the participants think others would score them, it was important to analyze the graph which displays the two results together, given as below;
Observing the results, we have seen that the participants on average scored themselves higher on the extraversion scale where they have to rate how others perceive them, according to their own (on average by as much as 0.54 points). The highest changes in the scores have come from sales in which the mean score of how much higher they rated that others would score them was by 1.17 point. Whilst finance and sourcing have not made any changes.

It may be safe to conclude that some that authors such as Brian, 2014 and Gebler 1969, who hypothesize that we as humans have different repertoires of personalities to choose from in different situations may be applicable in this research project. There is a clear difference in what the participant actually feels like in terms of the extraversion trait and how they actually behave. Sales has been the most evident example of this, who bumped up their extraversion score by 1.17 point on average.
This may be due to the societal expectation from sales participants to be more sociable and therefore they may feel pressurized to act more extroverted and that way asserts their authority and knowledge in the workplace. Or it may be due to the general need of the job, a sales person may have to be pseudo extrovert in order to perform well in this particular occupation, whilst actually bordering on more introverted qualities. It may also be because the participants may feel more outgoing being surrounded by their colleagues and friends and naturally picking up on the natural emotion.

However the difference in the mean scores overall of 0.54 is not enough to truly be able to link these theories to the research. In reality a 0.54 difference in a personality scale does not differ vastly, the participant does not suddenly become from a withdrawn introvert to an outgoing extrovert. Whilst there is some evidence it is not enough to truly be able to say that the theories definitely relate. A clear difference means a few points in score, whereas a difference of less than 1 can be considered to be ‘unclear’ and does not promise a change especially in personality. Introverts and extraverts are opposites of each other, therefore there is a need to definite clue in the form of a meaningful rating among the two.

It is also interesting to note the responses to the question ‘do you feel this role personally suits you? The graph below outlines the response of this question;
It is interesting to note that 40 out of 49 participants, that is 82% have stated that they feel the role that they are currently in suits them either all the time or most of the time. Whilst only 2, that makes 4%, participants have admitted that their role does not suit them at all. This is an interesting observation because one of the chief limitation or counter argument research project was facing from the beginning has been proven negative from this question, at least for this particular case study of Synthesio. Financial crisis may have a huge role in the occupational choice but in the end, most of the people find the job of their nature and according to their personality. Eventually the individuals also settle for the job they are assigned. However the results above show that 82% of participants feel that they are in the most suitable occupation within Synthesio.

These results strengthen the argument presented by Dunn, Mount, Barrick, & Ones, 1995 that interviewers subliminally pick up on the individuals’ traits and therefore pick the right candidate for the right position. This may mean that even if the candidate applies for a position, which may not be completely suited to their personality, the interviewer would not accept them.
for the specific role. This would suggest that the occupation picks the participant according to their nature and personality trait. An organization also helps building a personality and sharpening certain traits that are usually not focused upon or hidden.

For this research, it was also considered highly important to analyze various aspects of a participant’s job and compare it with the self-rated personality to see if the job is really for them and if they were completely honest about their extraversion score. We asked our participants if the role in their occupation involves interacting with other people, inside or outside their organization. The following graph is based on the answers we received.

As clear from the graph above, more than 30/49 participants answered positively when asked about the human interaction nature of their job. This makes up to 65% of the total people chosen for the interview. We tried to involve people belonging to various occupations to create variety in the responses. Whatever the occupation may be, an individual working has to deal with other people around. The number or people facing daily may vary according to job nature but there is hardly any work that involves no interaction at all.
People working in big organizations such as Synthesio have to socialize and interact in order to build constructive work environment. Only those working in accounting, finance or research department felt that their job is not people facing. They make up almost 14.2% of the total sample. Around 20% of the total participants stated that they have to interact and face people some of the times. This graph clearly shows that every occupation demands extraversion behavior to properly work and adjust in workplace. Human interaction is unavoidable not matter what the department may be.

The participants of survey were asked if they would prefer working alone or in a team. Following is the graph based on the results we received.

![Work preferences](image.png)

**Figure 6 Participants’ response to working preferences**

Clearly more people want to work in groups rather than working alone. According to the survey, more than 72% of the people involved in survey showed a positive attitude when asked if they prefer working in a group. Less than 5% wanted an environment where they could work all alone by themselves. Man is indeed a social animal to be living and working in groups. Here again, the occupational choice plays an important role but every job, big or small, requires
social interaction with colleagues, clients, customers and coworkers. Success of any project depends on efficient communication and teamwork.

From the results obtained and the literature reviewed, it can be suggested that every job demands a certain degree of outgoing and friendly nature to handle the tasks and give an output based on best of efforts and skills which are only possible if a group of people excelling in various fields work together as a team to achieve a common goal. People reluctant in forming a group or exercising active communication can be left behind and that is why big multinationals and organizations such as Synthesio carefully selects employees that have excellent communication skills.

Another question that helped in determine the extravert nature of participants was their eagerness in communication and explaining their point to a large group of people. The graph below presents the responses obtained:

![Bar graph](image)

*Figure 7 Participants’ response to writing a report or giving a presentation*

Given the above results, it can be easily concluded that more than 60% of the participants prefer explaining their point to a live audience through communication and multimedia while less
than 15% showed complete reluctance for verbal communication. The overall behavior of participants is towards extraversion as indicated by the above results. An individual willing to conduct a presentation reflects excellent confidence level as well as good presentation and communication skills.

An extravert is enthusiastic towards interaction with people and likes to engage in communication. The eagerness to face the audience in the process of presentation by the participants clearly indicates the extravert behavior. As mentioned earlier, organizations such as Synthesio hires individuals on the basis of their livewire and outgoing nature. The overall extroversion is therefore very high. People belonging from research and accounts department are obviously not equally extrovert. This also explains the theory studied earlier in literature review that extraversion is directly related to career success and career satisfaction.

In order to dig a little deeper to find the link between behavior and occupation, we gave an interesting question “Do you prefer given an example first more than being given the rule first?” The results are shown in the form of graphs below.

![Graph showing preference for example vs rule first]

### Do you prefer given an example first more than being given the rule first?

- Yes: 5
- Some of the time: 15
- No: 20
- Most of the time: 9

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The bar graph clearly indicates that more individuals are interested in knowing the rule first and then the supporting detail or example. This is a common psychology question appearing in various personality tests quizzes. This question is merely a check to see if the individuals are actively listening enough to jump to a conclusion when given the example first. It has been agreed in the literature review that introverts are good listeners hence they can quickly conclude the rule from the example given. However, in case of extraverts this is the exact opposite. They are more interested in the crux of the story than the story itself. This graph is a proof that most of the individuals participating in the survey are either “extraverts or skilled introverts” belonging to social and interacting departments such as sales, marketing, sourcing etc.

Our survey asked if the participants feel misfit and want to change to their occupation of choice. Below graph is based on the answers received.

An amazing 97% showed satisfaction in their current job. This completely ruled out the suggestion that financial crisis has forced individuals to opt for jobs that are against their nature (Grigoriev & Salikhov., 2008). Most of the individuals surveyed suggested that they are highly
satisfied with their job and job satisfaction is directly linked to job success (Seibert and Kraimer 2001). So we can also prove the link of extravert behavior and job success discussed earlier (Bozionelos, 2004).

The participants of survey were asked about their choice of office. Graph below represents the preference of type of office as chosen by our participants.

![Graph showing office environment preferences](image)

**Figure 10; Office environment preferred**

It is important to note here that most of the survey participants belonged to fields such as sales, sourcing, marketing, and marketing which required extravert personality traits. Almost 82% of the individuals participating in the survey preferred open rooms and rooms with optional privacy as their offices. Less than 18% participants preferred a closed room for peace and privacy. This is because a small number of participants belonging from accounts, finance, and research departments were involved for the survey. Due to the job nature, individuals from these departments need a peaceful work environment to work away from the hustle. Hence the slightly less introvert behavior of the participants is understandable.

The results obtained from the graphs and survey questionnaire were totally based on the views of the participating individuals. The responses may also have reflected the nature or the overall
culture of the organization under the study. An argument already discussed above stated that the conclusion based on the data may not hold true because individuals sometimes are able to display qualities are do not naturally exist as a trait. As mentioned earlier, we understand the limitation faced by this research and the already present research papers discussed in this study. However, it is believed that the results obtained through this research is up to certain extent, if not completely, true.
Chapter 5; —Discussion and Conclusion

Observing the charts based on results on extrovert rating oneself and others rating an individual clearly indicate that there is a correlation between the personality trait extroversion and occupational selection. Participants belonging to sales, sources and marketing department were generally seen to be higher rated in extraversion scale than any other department. There is definitely a relationship between having more extraverted qualities if you work in a more extrovert-required role such as sourcing and sales. These both scored higher than the mean extraversion level for all the participants added together in both questions. Likewise, a relationship can be devised by looking at the introvert rating and department the individuals belong to, such as finance and insights.

However, limitations must be kept in mind while observing the results. A general rule cannot be concluded from the given data because the legitimacy of the primary research is still under consideration. Many irregularities in behavior of participants were seen during the research. Individuals belonging to highly introvert designed jobs were observed giving themselves a high extraversion rating and at the same time being happy about their job. For example, a participant belonging to research and development had scored himself on the extraversion scale of 10. Research and development role is very solitary as it involves updating the existing software that is Synthesio’s product. This same participant has also stated that they are happy in current position. Another example is where a participant is sales however has scored himself a 5 on the rate of extraversion and has also said he is happy in his current position.

The results have also showed that the theories by such authors as Brian, 2014 and Gebler 1969, can also provide valuable insight suggesting that humans have different characteristics to choose from depending on the situation. Overall on average participants scored themselves
higher by 0.52 when asked how their colleagues would rate them on the scale of extraversion.

Whilst there is not a definite relationship between the theories and these research results. It can definitely suggest that participants may act out of character to be better at their roles or simply feel more sociable around other individuals.

It was also interesting to see that 82% of Synthesio’s employees who participated in the questionnaire felt that their occupation suited them either all of the time or most of the time. This proving the initial hypothesizing that high unemployment may mean that participants have to take roles, which they may not be suited to, is wrong. While most of the participants of this survey belonged to departments that require extraverts for the job and that was easily seen by the results, therefore the results may not be applied for organization of a different structure / field / expertise.

Large proportion of participants reclined in the extravert category of people. The participants showed interest in communication, social, teamwork and presentation skills. They were highly satisfied with their current occupation which correlates to extravert personality. The introvert behavior was not entirely absent, but was overshadowed by extraverts, which explains the mean of 6.4 and 7.02 out of a scale of 10.

From this research, it can be concluded that the personality trait and occupational choice develops a weak, if not very strong, link with each other supported by the research and finding of this study. While this paper has its own limitations of small sample size and honesty of the participants. It can also be argued that interviewers only select the right participants for the role, and that’s why so many Synthesio employees that participated rated that the specific occupation suits them.
Recommendations and Research Opportunities:

The research survey supported a number of already present studies in a highly positive way, however, this sample set of participants cannot give a definite link to personality trait and occupational choice. Interpretation of obtained results supports various already proposed theories in this regard at the same time rules out a number of them as well. Grigoriev & M. Salikhov in 2008 proposed that the financial crisis has lead individuals into unemployment and accepting jobs which they may not normally accept. This research has proved this theory to be ineffective because more than 97% of the participants showed a highly satisfactory response toward s their jobs.

The research question is answered in the best possible way, however due to very little statistics experience and limited resource, there could be some additions made by interpreting results in a different manner. Whilst there is a clear correlation between the level of extraversion and the occupational position, it is unclear of the reasons behind this. The questionnaire could have been more in-depth and could have included open answers. This research project may have also been a little over ambitious, experts in their field may fail to provide valuable research, therefore a first time researcher has very little chance of making a valuable contribution.

For future projects of a similar nature our recommendations would be to conduct interviews rather than hand out surveys, interviews are more personal and in psychological study would have been more useful. Another recommendation would be to develop a better analysis technique; it is extremely difficult for a first time researcher to analyze the results in the best way possible. Another recommendation would be to try to analyze one aspect or personality rather than focus on multiples (occupation, job satisfaction and extraversion). This may prove provide more precise and accurate results.
The limitations for this research project may also be applied to the type of research used. A questionnaire is not as suitable for this type of research project as interviews. This is because a questionnaire only takes into consideration what the individual is answering in the questionnaire rather than their actual behavior. Questionnaire may also be too simplistic to truly understand a person’s level of extraversion, after all a person’s personality is a very broad aspect and is definitely not a questionnaire type of topic.

The first time researcher is often learning through trial and error on the research project, which may mean that the research project is not conducted in the best way it could be. This may mean that the results are not interpreted in the best way that they could be, as well as conducted the research in the best way it could have been done.

Overall the research project could be better however it does add to existing literature, which already discusses all of the issues stated. It also has a basis of being more updated and therefore more relevant, the last research that has been undertaken is by J. Arnold, 2010 on work employment, this is only 2 years after the recession crisis, and therefore it may not be as valuable for this present moment as this research paper would be.
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Appendix 1

Dissertation questionnaire:

1. What is your position within Synthesio?
   - Research and development
   - Sales
   - Sourcing
   - Marketing
   - Admin/Clerk/HR
   - Finance
   - Client services
   - Insights

2. Would you say this is a people facing role?
   - Yes
   - Most of the time
   - Some of the time
   - No

3. Would you personally say that this role suits you?
   - Yes
   - Most of the time
4. All things being equal, I:

- Almost always prefer working in a team.
- Usually prefer working in a team.
- Enjoy both teamwork and working alone.
- Usually prefer working alone.
- Almost always prefer working alone.

5. Do you prefer presentations more than writing a report for your role/performance in a certain project?

- Yes
- Most of the time
- Some of the time
- No

6. Do you prefer given an example first more than being given the rule first?

- Yes
- Most of the time
- Some of the time
- No

7. When you give your answers, do you tend to be trusting more than skeptical?
8. If given a choice which position within Synthesio do you feel would suit you better?

- Research and development
- Sales
- Sourcing
- Marketing
- Admin/Clerk/HR
- Finance
- Client services
- Insights

9. What type of office environment do you prefer?

- Open space
- Open space with some closed areas if privacy is required
- Private rooms organized by teams
- Private office

10. Would you personally describe yourself as a sociable person?

- Yes
- Most of the time
11. Would you say that you find it easy to make and keep friends?

- Some of the time
- No

12. Ideally how much time would you like to spend time alone in a week?

- 0-10 hours
- 11-22 hours
- 23-30 hours
- 30+ hours

13. How would you rate yourself on a scale of extroversion to introversion. (10 being most extrovert, 1 being most introvert)

- 0-2
- 3-5
- 6-8
- 9-10

14. How do you think others would rate your extraversion to introversion? (10 being most extrovert, 1 being most introvert)
Appendix 2

Email which was sent to participate in the questionnaire:

‘Good afternoon everyone,

Below, please find a message from Ieva Songailaite. Ieva is our Office Manager for the UK team. She is currently completing her studies at Birkbeck University with a concentration in the HR discipline. As a requirement, she needs to prepare a dissertation and she's asking our support to help drive some of the research findings.

She's compiled a short questionnaire that ties individuals' personality attributes and what roles they ultimately select for career. This survey is voluntary. The results are anonymous. The information will not be reviewed by Synthesio in any manner. The raw data will be used by Ieva and her dissertation advisor only.

“Hi Everyone, I need your help! I am currently working on a final research project for my last year of university. My research project is about trying to determine whether your personality traits such as introversion/extroversion affect your occupational choice. I would really appreciate you taking 2 minutes out of your day and completing this simple questionnaire which you can access via https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/9X7LC8. The answers will be completely anonymous and will only be seen by me and my advisor. Thank you!” – Ieva Songailaite

However her request has generated another possible action - to be taken later. I do like the idea of sending an employee satisfaction survey to better understand what we are doing well and where we need to improve. I will incorporate that into our Q2 efforts that we are working towards in support of the Career Pathing/ Career Development initiatives. That is separate from Ieva’s efforts here so I want to make sure those are well distanced.

For now, if you are comfortable doing so, please take a few minutes to answer her survey.

Thank you.’