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## TOURISM AND EDUCATION MANAGEMENT STUDENTS' CHARACTERISTICS FROM POINT OF SOCIONICS VIEW

*Set out in the article, the aim of the study is to describe the student groups in tourism and education management study directions, on the basis of the sociotypes research to improve educators knowledge of the nature of students. So tourism students and education management students have statistically significant differing sociotype features. Therefore the research of the author proves that the sociotype structure of tourism educators corresponds to the sociotype structure of tourism students and it has a social orientation but sociotype of tertiary educators as a whole has a more humanitarian nature.*

**Keywords:** Socionics; sociotype; student; educator

### Introduction

The pedagogical proficiency of teaching staff is not only reflected by the individual's pedagogical competence but also the understanding of interpersonal relationships [6]. But it can be seen from the results of the survey conducted among Latvian school directors and teachers on the preparedness of graduates for the job of teachers – one of the frequently mentioned conclusions is that the new teachers are well educated in the subjects but lack knowledge and skills in other areas, including understanding the personality of the learners [5]. The primary task of all education employees is to gather precise information about their learners [4].

One of the aids that could provide information about students for successful decision-making in the education process is Socionics - the theory on individual sociotypes, their interrelationships and management of human potential development. Sociotype is the natural set of individual physic features that determine how the individual gets energy, perceives information, make decisions and structures his/her own life.

At the end of the sixties and the beginning of seventies the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Lithuanian scholar A. Augustinavichute (04.04.1927. – 19.08.2005.) developed the theory on 16 psychological types based on the typology of C.G. Jung, as well as using the A. Kempinski concept of informative metabolism [11], and termed it as Socionics. Socionics is widely renowned in Russia and Ukraine. Socionics research was approved and appended by the other contemporary variant of C.G. Jung's theory, an instrument widely known in the USA and Western Europe as Type theory – the application of MBTI (Myers Briggs Type Indicator).

Socionics as well as Type theory characterises individuals using 4 dichotomies (Extroversion – internationally recognised designation with the letter E /Introversion (I), Intuition (N)/Sensing (S), Logic (T; Thinking in MBTI)/Ethics (F; feeling in MBTI), Rational (J; judging in MBTI/Irrational (P; perceiving in MBTI), and combining the poles results in 16 variants or 16 combinations of letter codes that refer to a definite sociotype. Certain intertype relationships are formed between definite types of individuals.

The aim of the study is to research students groups in tourism and education management directions, to test the assumption that certain professions are attractive for individuals of certain sociotypes.

### Research methodology

Several methods of determination of sociotypes can be applied depending on the goals. The visual-verbal method can be used for the precise determination of sociotype. The sociotype tendencies of social groups can be determined using tests as the incorrect reply of a respondent regarding dichotomy features is compensated with the same probability of incorrect reply of another respondent in the opposite direction and therefore the overall picture will reflect the real situation [12]. If the researcher is only interested in the overall result then the responses of each respondent are not reflected [7].

Although several tests have been formulated in socionics none of them as acknowledged by socionic researchers themselves are qualitative enough as it is a relatively new field. Therefore the author, having investigated the works of more than one hundred (117) socionics researchers and more than a

half hundred (61) type theory researchers, carrying out a comparative analysis of the dichotomy characteristics in the type theory and socionics as well as dichotomy features and other aspects that determine the work motivation factors, learning styles and the optimal fields of an individual's activity came to conclusion that both specialists of type theory as well as socionics have the same opinions regarding these issues. Therefore the author in her research has used the discoveries of both type theory as well as socionic researchers. The MBTI test is copyrighted and it is expensive. The author upon empirically testing the Jung typology *on-line* Humanmetrics test in English found it well formulated and easily accessible. It provides respondents the opportunity to see their results – the sociotype letter combination and a description. Therefore the author organised the translation of the test in Latvian requesting the translator to focus on the transfer of the essence of the questions into the Latvian language as emphasised by the specialist M. Raščevska [9] on psychological tests and questionnaires. The test consists of 72 statements with just a "YES" or "NO" answer for each of the statements. The author added instructions to the test wherein she underlined that there are no incorrect, better or worse answers and that the evaluation of each respondent for the respective statement is the most important. Answering the test questions the respondents must be able to objectively analyse themselves. Some personality features should not be considered more valuable than others. Respondents have to also try to understand their subconscious behaviour and motivation for choices in different circumstances.

The author provided tourism stu-

dents the opportunity to complete the test in Latvian during the personnel management class while discussing the topic "Personnel interaction" and the respondents could later filling the same answers for the English version on the Internet site [www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes2.asp](http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes2.asp) [8] get the results - the four letter sociotype combination and could get a description of their sociotype features developed by socionic researchers. If the students themselves deemed that the sociotype character 85%-100% corresponds to their own thinking they submitted the 4 letter combination to the author. If the students deemed that the sociotype character corresponds to their own thinking less than 85%, they changed the sociotype code by changing a letter and getting acquainted with the relevant sociotype features. The letter of the sociotype code that they were least sure of while answering the test questions was the one that they changed. For example if the student while answering the test in English got the result - „ISTJ” with a percentage 78:1:50:33, and reading the description admits that it did not fit his personality then probably his code was „INTJ”, and only the answers describing the sensory sociotype sounded attractive to him. If the student still could not recognise himself in the sociotype description the author applied the visual-verbal method asking additional questions that helped the student to understand one's sociotype. As shown by the practical testing the test measurements led to consistent results.

In order to test and compare accessible tests of different socionic authors and Jung typology test results the author carried out 2 experimental studies and concluded that using 4 different sociotype determination tests the best results in both the cases including the correspondence of students' self evaluation were results got from Jung typology test and consequently the test was used for further research.

During the one semester of the academic year the author gave the final Latvian variant of the Jung test to students in September and November. The sociotype determined with the help of Jung test for 76% of the students in September was the same as in November. As the students had also carried out independent studies

and an in depth study of their type descriptions there is justifiable grounds to consider the results reliable.

Research has been carried out worldwide in several study fields and it is concluded that a definite type of individual is more or less connected with the field. No such research has been published in Latvia. As the author in her day to day activities has more contact with tourism management students, students of these study disciplines were basically involved in further research. There were four stages of the practical research. The first two stages were carried out to ascertain whether individuals with a certain sociotype were attracted to a certain study discipline. 448 students of tourism study programme of a Latvian Higher Educational Institution (herein after referred to as the HEI) were respondents in the 1<sup>st</sup> research stage and 264 tourism students and 46 students of education management study programme of 7 other Latvian HEIs were respondents during the 2<sup>nd</sup> research stage. At the same time the author evaluated the conformity of theoretical concepts of socionics in practice and their application possibilities in academic management.

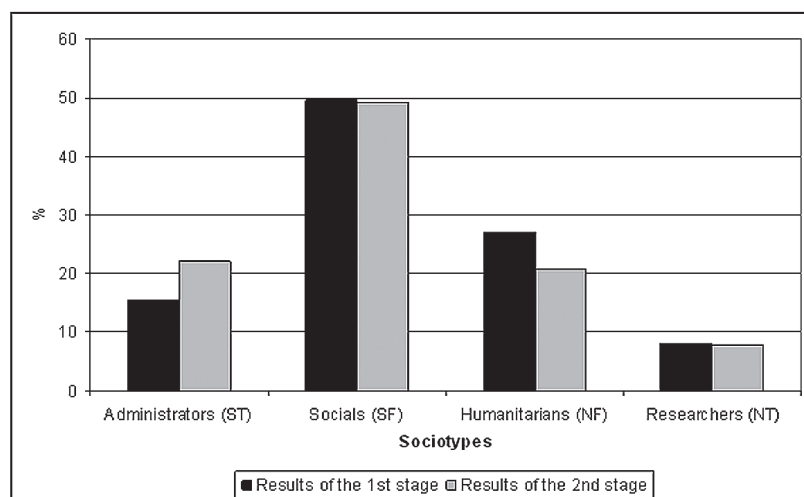
The 3<sup>rd</sup> research stage goal is to ascertain the dominant sociotype of educational management students and the 4<sup>th</sup> research stage goal is to ascertain the dominant sociotype of educators. Comparing the educators' and students' sociotype structure the possible problems in interrelationship during the pedagogical process can be ascertained. All educators from one HEI and tourism course educators from 4 HEIs were selected as respondents.

## Results analysis

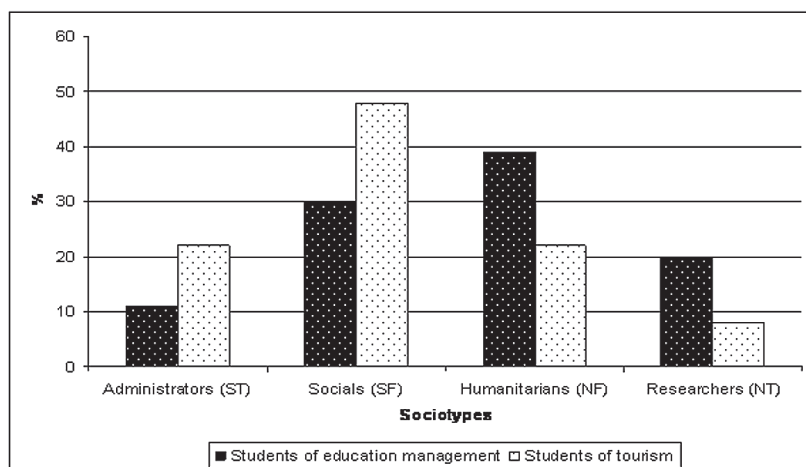
Comparing the results of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> stage (Fig. 1) it could be concluded that there is similarity in the sociotype structure.

In order to ascertain the average result of statistical significance the author proposed a statistical hypothesis for the dichotomy features SF, ST, NF and NT of each professional discipline group and tested it with the Mann-Whitney test. The critical limits of test values are not exceeded at probability of 95%, and level of significance  $0.936 > 0.05$ , which indicates that the distribution for SF for tourism students of one HEI who determined their sociotype complementing their sociotype description acquired as result of the test with their own evaluation and tourism students of seven other HEIs who just determined their sociotype in accordance to C.G. Jung's test are similar. The NF (significance level  $0.065 > 0.05$ ) and NT (significance level  $0.969 > 0.05$ ) features have the same distribution in both groups.

Only the distribution of ST features (significance level  $0.027 < 0.05$ ) for both respondent groups differ. The ST feature is not characteristic for tourism students and therefore does not significantly affect the distribution. It is characteristic of students in their self-evaluation to confuse logical thinking with logics type features in socionics and as indicated in the literature the answers characterising the logic features seem statistically more attractive than ethical [3]. These research results prove the validity of this tool –



**Figure 1. Comparison of sociotype of tourism students in Latvian Higher Educational Institutions (comparison of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> stage research results)**



**Figure 2. Comparison of sociotypes of education management and tourism students**

contents of the 72 point test for determining the sociotype. The research results indicate that C.G. Jung's typology test is applicable to study the sociotype of large respondent groups. The responses of the tourism students of 7 HEIs differ from the responses of education management students. It can be seen in the comparison made by the author on the distribution of sociotypes of respondents of both programmes in accordance to their field of professional activity (Fig.2.).

A statistical hypothesis was proposed and tested with the Mann-Whitney test for comparing the average research results. The critical limits of Mann-Whitney test values were exceeded at probability of 95%, for SF feature (significance level (alpha)  $0.018 < 0.05$ ), that indicates that SF feature distribution is not the same for tourism and education management students – SF feature is more characteristic for tourism students; for NF feature (significance level (alpha)  $0.007 < 0.05$ ), that indicates NF feature distribution is not the same for tourism and education management students - NF feature is more characteristic for education management students; for NT feature (significance level (alpha)  $0.014 < 0.05$ ), that indicates NT feature distribution is not the same for tourism and education management students - NT feature is more characteristic for education management students.

The critical limits of Mann-Whitney test values were not exceeded at probability of 95%, for ST feature (significance level (alpha)  $0.085 > 0.050$ ), that indicates that ST feature distribution is

the same for tourism and education management students.

So tourism students and education management students have statistically significant differing sociotype features. The student group differences correspond to sociotics theoretical concepts on sociotypes for professional orientation – majority of tourism students are SF sociotype oriented towards service and assisting people whereas majority of education management students are of humanitarian group NF sociotype who are interested in human potential and their capabilities.

In higher education student movement from one study programme to another can be observed or even termination of studies. One of the reasons for it is that students do not feel secure and confident about their conformity of the choice of profession to their abilities, interests and the society needs. The 2007 edition of "Augstākās izglītības pamatrādītāji" [Basic indicators of higher education] of the education and culture general directorate mentions that student dropouts in higher education is a topic that should be paid special attention. Student retention indicators differ considerably in different countries. For example International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) data indicate that at level 5A – the student ratio in tertiary education who continue studies can be higher or equal to 80% - such is the case in Bulgaria, Ireland, Italy, Cyprus and Malta. However in Estonia and Latvia it is approximately 50% [1]. The Latvian labour

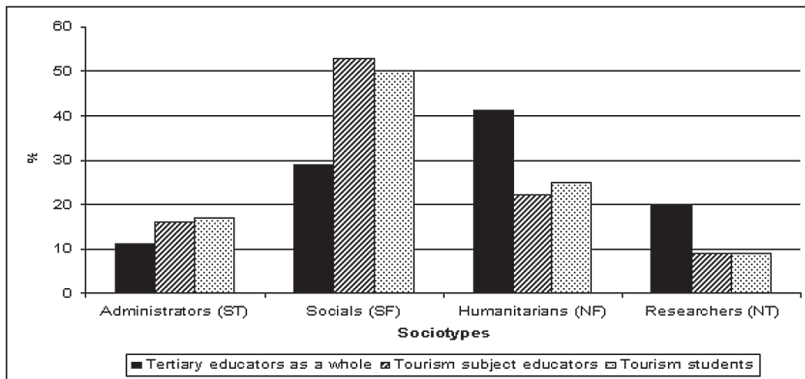
market research [2] concludes that correspondence of employment gained to the respective field of education after completion of studies or during studies in a professional education institution is for example 58% in the service sector and only 44% in the commerce and administrative sector. Therefore the information grounds and solutions should be sought.

The 4<sup>th</sup> research stage. Analysing the sociotypes of educators of an HEI as a whole it could be concluded that out of 16 sociotypes the ENFJ type of educator is the dominant – 25%. Such a result is consistent as it points out the social role of this sociotype - "teacher". Majority of HEI educators are extraverted 62.5% rather than introverted more of intuitive type – 61% that is characterised by focus on abilities, correlations rather than sensory, more of the ethical type - 70% rather than logical and more rational – 75% rather than irrational.

Comparing the educators of tourism courses by sociotype with educators of the HEI as a whole it can be concluded tourism educators are more sensory (69%) rather than intuitive (31%). These results are similar to those of 1<sup>st</sup> research stage results on sociotype of tourism students – sensory (66%). The other dichotomy results of tourism students are very similar to the tourism educators rather than results of educators of HEI on the whole. It also corresponds to the research results that educators of study subjects use variation in accordance to their type. It also means that teaching habits of educators of tourism subjects correspond to the cognitive styles of tourism students, which cannot be said about educators of general subjects – philosophy, microeconomics, management etc.

Analysing the research data in accordance to divisions of fields of professional activity in Sociotics and Type theory the similarities and differences between the results of educators of HEIs on the whole, educators of tourism subjects and tourism students can be clearly observed. The author proposed a statistical hypothesis to compare the sociotype structure of tourism educators and tourism students and tested it with Mann-Whitney test.

The level of significance of SF (0.687), ST (0.977), NF (0.522) and



**Figure 3. Distribution (%) of tertiary educators as a whole, tourism subject educators and tourism students in accordance to their fields of professional activity**

NT (0.792) features exceed 0.05, so the distribution of features for tourism educators and tourism students is the same with probability 95% in accordance to groups of all professional activity fields.

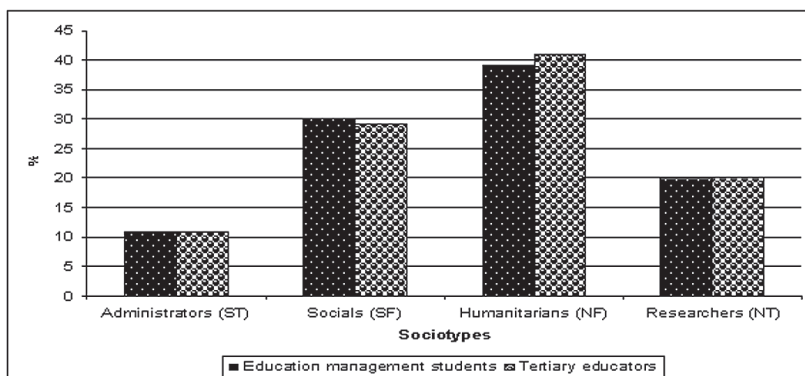
The author also put forward a statistical hypothesis on the differences in sociotype structure between educators of HEIs as a whole and tourism educators in relation to professional activity in groups. The hypothesis was tested using the Mann-Whitney test. The critical limits of Mann-Whitney test values were exceeded at probability of 95%, for SF feature (significance level (alpha)  $0.003 < 0.05$ ),  $0.029 < 0.05$  for NF feature and 0.005 for NT feature that confirms that SF, NF and NT feature distribution is not the same for tertiary educators and tourism student sociotype structure are not the same. There is similarity only regarding the ST feature.

The author created a bar chart reflecting the results of analysis of sociotype structures of tertiary educators as a whole, tourism subject educators and tourism students in accordance to their fields of professional activity (Fig.3).

The most common sociotype among tertiary educators as whole is the humanitarian group – intuitive and ethical NF (41%). This type is characterised by focus on capabilities, and human potential. As mentioned in literature the optimal fields of activity in accordance to their interests are fields where understanding of human nature and motivation is involved e.g. psychology, human resources, pedagogy, research in the aforementioned fields, writing etc. Educators of a certain sociotype apply a certain typical for such types influencing, persuasion, stimulation methods as well as a communication style that is characteristic for this type [13].

These results could be compared to the results of the 3<sup>rd</sup> research stage analysed before regarding sociotype structure of education management post-graduate students as the students parallel to their studies also carry out pedagogical activity at various education levels in schools (Fig.4).

In both cases the NF sociotype was most common among respondents, and the most rare – ST sociotype. Statistical



**Figure 4. Comparison of sociotype of education management students and tertiary educators**

calculations also prove that. The distribution of sociotype features of education management students and tertiary educators are the same (SF – 0.838; ST – 0.980; NF – 0.843; NT – 0.992).

Among tourism educators and tourism students however the social group sociotype dominates, i.e. sensory and ethical: 53% and 51% respectively. These are people whose optimal fields of activity are fields where it is necessary to practically assist and serve people.

Summing up the case study, carried out on the basis of theoretical concepts and in three stages on student and educators groups confirmed the assumption that certain professions are attractive to individuals of certain socio-types. Tourism students and education management students have statistically significant differing sociotype features. The research of the author proves that the sociotype structure of tourism educators corresponds to the sociotype structure of tourism students and it has a social orientation but sociotype of tertiary educators as a whole has a more humanitarian nature.

Researches in the field of socionics may contribute to successful decision-making in the process of educational management. Differences in sociotype of educators of general subjects and students can lead to interrelationship problems as the participants may lack the understanding of the features and different needs of one another. On the basis of the theory on individual socio-types and their interrelationships and management of human potential development, socionics may provide the information favouring the understanding of the personality of learners. The forecasting ability of socionics is of great importance as it provides the opportunity to foresee what the interests of the individual in the educational process are. It is recommended to study the sociotype structure dominant in student groups. It would allow the educator to foresee the students' working habits and skills, build rapport with the students, motivate them towards academic excellence and enrich the students' education process.

The socionic concepts based on C.G. Jung's psychological type theory could be used in the creation of professionogram and psychogram, for consulting in the choice of study disciplines and for student career consultations.

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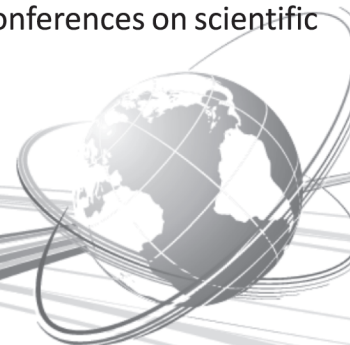


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