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Personality tests in recruitment

Patrik Remann and Angelika Nordin

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Abstract

Before choosing a test for selection in recruitment, it is necessary to observe some characteristics that may influence its results. The test should have a research background that makes it suitable for selection. Otherwise, the test may give an incorrect assessment. This, in turn, can lead to wrong decisions in the selection process, and wrong final candidates are chosen. Therefore, it is relevant that the test you use has high reliability and validity. This article aims to examine just this in psychometric theories and research. We found that the only psychological theory to be used in recruitment and selection is the five-factor model. We have also found out why other theories and tests that are not made for selection are popular, even though they do not have a stable and valid research background.

Keywords: Psychometric testing, recruitment and selection.

Personality: concepts and theories

A good recruitment process involves steps such as searching, interviewing, and evaluating people. When achieved, a successful recruitment process has the chance of hiring the right person for the correct position. Nowadays, organizations need to obtain the most successful methods maintaining, at the same time use, competitiveness and adapting to a dynamic market environment. Therefore, human capital has never been of such importance to organizations as now. Through the movement of attracting, shortlisting, selecting, and appointing suitable candidates for jobs by the recruitment process, competitive advantage must be achieved, and it is possible to consider some personality tests to make the right and best choice (Hughes, 2005).

The personality has been studied through the years, and there have been some debates about its definition. One essential function of this debate is identifying the most critical factors in which individuals differ. In other words, what makes the person unique in an infinite number of ways of being (John, Robins & Pervin, 2008). The study of personality has been present nowadays, and some names such as Murray, Allport, Lewis, Cattell, and Goldberg are related to studies in this role. Their researches contributed to the understanding of personality.

For Engler (2009), personality theories may function as philosophy, science, and art. As scientists, personality theorists aim to develop hypotheses whose intentions are to help people understand human behaviour. As philosophers, the main goal is exploring what the meaning of being a person is. As artists, they investigate human behaviour that can be applied to make a better life (Engler, 2009).

Some different definitions of personality have been defined according to the field of study. This diversity has contributed to several themes throughout the history of personality psychology (John, Robins & Pervin, 2008). In general, “personality is defined either as (a) a set of attributes characterizing an individual or as (b) the underlying system that generates the set of attributes”

(Saucier, 2008, p.29). For the American Psychological Association – APA, personality is defined as the individual differences regarding patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving (APA, n.d). For Cattell, personality can be objectively measured (Friedman & Schustack, 2001). Erik Erikson considered that the personality extends to develop past the age of five (Harvard, n.d.). For Warren, 1922 (p. 360), “the personality is the entire mental organization of a human being at any stage of this development.” For Allport (1937), there is no correct definition of personality since it has some meanings such as psychological, theological, philosophical, juristic, sociological, and others.

Personality tests: a big picture of them

The curiosity around personality comes from the ancient Greeks. Hippocrates defined four distinct bodily fluids (sanguine, choleric, phlegmatic, and melancholic) to specify a personality system, and its concept remains until today (Knight, 2017).

The need for intelligence and personality tests began in world War I and II. At this period, the concern was to choose the right person for the correct position in very little time. Tests and questionnaires became available to allocate men to appropriate posts considering their abilities and their procedure to select people (Hughes, 2005). There have been numerous studies exploring select methods since the 1980s, and their use has been growing over time (Jenkins, 2001). The measurement of personality has been an object of interest over the years (Edenborough, 2005; Bolton & Thompson, 2013).

The apparent success of intelligence testing early in the 20th century resulted in several studies, and it convinced many personality psychologists to start thinking that the personality could also be measured (John, Robins & Pervin, 2008). Nowadays, there is a variability of psychological tests available on the market. They have been designed to measure competencies such as “cognitive ability, tests of specific skills, personality questionnaires, and literacy and numeracy tests” (Jenkins, 2001, p.5).

For John, Robins, and Pervin (2008, p.30), “one key function of personality theory is to identify the most important ways in which individuals differ from among the infinite dimensions of possible difference.” Hence, psychological tests’ function is to measure individual differences (Anastasi, 1954; Martin & Jackson, 2002; Baron, Melania & Agustina, 2020), and this characteristic is essential to organizations. For Anastasia (1954), personality tests frequently refer to measure aspects such as emotional adjustments, social relations, interests, and relations in the terminology of psychological testing. These personality assessments also allow people to understand how they think and how they react, given some situations (En, Lan, Tay & Ng, 2011). Therefore, the personality tests can provide the organizations with a big picture of the job applicant and the other information gathered from interviews and references (Husbands, 1993).

Traditionally some organizations have increased the use of psychological tests to classify people to determine whether they will fit the organizational culture or not (Bhardwaj, Mishra & Hemalatha, 2017). Also, the use of personality tests has been recommended due to lower turnover rates, thereby ensuring higher productivity (Husbands, 1993). For Baron, Melania & Agustina (2020), when an organization is aware of its needs, it is possible to apply several methods to obtain and retain the best employees.

Before choosing a test, it is necessary to observe some characteristics that may influence its results. When selecting a test for recruitment purposes, if its use is wrong, the test can give a

false assessment level, leading to incorrect decisions (Bailey, 2017). Therefore, it is relevant to foresee the adopted test's reliability and validity (Anastasi, 1954).

In general, personality tests do not resemble a test, but with a series of questions, the candidate should agree or disagree (Roberts, 1997). A test's reliability is related to the "consistency of scores obtained by the same individual on different occasions or with different sets of equivalent items" (Anastasi, 1954, p.94). It indicates the extent of the error variance, considering the total deviation of test scores. The test validity refers to what the test is measuring and how well it will be done by some criteria (Anastasi, 1954).

For Weiner and Greene (2017), reliability is a correlation coefficient, and it sets the upper limits of the test validation. Therefore, reliability is a mandatory test characteristic before its validity can even be considered. Once a test is considered reliable, its validity becomes paramount (Weiner & Greene, 2017).

Some personality tests have been developed and studied over the years. Some of them are more eminent than others, and it is necessary to consider some aspects before choosing one of them. Some personality tests will be presented following, emphasizing their pros and cons, their main uses, and their characteristics.

Myers Briggs test (MBTI)

Some personality tests have been designed based on a psychological theory of personality (Edenborough, 2005). The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), for instance, is based on the Carl Jung theory, which essence is around ideas about perception and judgment and the individual's attitudes in each of these factors (Myers & McCaulley, 1993). The MBTI is designed to determine the preferences in how people see the world and make decisions upon four dimensions stemming from Carl Jung's theory (King & Manson, n.d.). The MBTI indicator is currently available in 20 languages, and it has been used in organizational and counselling settings (King & Manson, n.d.).

Considering Jung's theory, the MBTI proposes that people's personality reflects their judgment and how information is perceived. The mental functions operate with attitudes, which will indicate "whether energy is outwardly or inwardly directed and whether the outside world is 'judged,' either logically or emotionally, or "perceived," either by sensation or by intuition" (Edenborough, 2005, p.31). In summary, the MBTI aims to identify the reactions and preferences of people regarding perception and judgment. Hence, each preference's effects can be entrenched by research and settle for practical use (Myers & McCaulley, 1993).

The first MBTI instrument publishing occurred in 1962, and since 1975, MBTI has been passing for updates and researches by the Myers-Briggs Company (The Myer Briggs Company, n.d). This test began with Katharine Cook Briggs and her daughter, Isabel Briggs Myers (Bolton & Thompson, 2013). Their interest in personality types increased with World War II, which influenced the test's development. For Meyers, when people understand each other, they start working better together, and no conflicts will happen (The Myer Briggs Company, n.d; King & Manson, n.d.).

There are currently four versions of the MBTI: a self-scorable Form M, a standard Form M, Form Q, and MBTI Step III (King & Manson, n.d.). The MBTI is designed to present respondents' preferences in four dimensions (King & Manson, n.d.). These dimensions describe the individual's preferences on what people attend in a given situation and how they conclude what they perceive (Myers & McCaulley, 1993). The four dimensions are split into opposite

pairs known as “dichotomies,” and each one is a division of two preferences, as follow (King & Manson, n.d.):

Extraversion or introversion: how people focus their attention. The extroverts are oriented toward the exterior and tend to focus on people and objects’ perception and judgment. Introverts are oriented toward the inner world, tending to focus their perception and judgment on concepts and ideas (Myers & McCaulley, 1993). Briggs and Myers defined this pair similarly to Jung’s attitude-based description of introversion and extraversion. Jung’s theory uses the relationship between energy, action, and reflection to consider the extrovert person who gains strength through action and loses it through reflection. The introverted person is the one that loses energy from the action and gains energy from reflection (King & Manson, n.d.).

Sensing perception or intuitive perception: how people absorb information. The sense people may rely on the process of sensing. On the other hand, intuitive people may rely on the obvious process (Myers & McCaulley, 1993). Jung describes this pair as “perceiving” functions related to how people perceive the world (King & Manson, n.d.).

Thinking judgment or feeling judgment: how people make decisions after taking the information. Some people may rely on logical consequences, and other people may rely on feelings before they decide something (Myers & McCaulley, 1993). Jung describes this pair as “judging” functions since it relates to how people choose to make a decision: by sensitive or intuitive thinking (King & Manson, n.d.).

Judgment or perception: how people deal with the world. Some people prefer a judgment process for dealing with situations, and some people preferers a perceptive process for dealing with some situations (Myers & McCaulley, 1993).

Some researchers have published books regarding the MBTI’s lack of science. Merve Emre, an associate professor at the University of Oxford and fellow at Worcester College, published the book “The Personality Brokers: The Strange History of Myers-Briggs and the Birth of Personality Training” in 2018, and the content therein includes the history of this test and how it became widely popular. The book “In the Mind’s Eye: Enhancing Human Performance”, published in 1991 by The Committee on Techniques for the Enhancement of Human Performance, states that “there is no sufficient, well-designed research to justify the use of the Myer-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) in career counselling program. Much of the current evidence is based on inadequate methodologies” (Druckman & Bjork, 1991).

Several analyses have shown the MBTI’s ineffectiveness to predict people’s success at the job and their possible results (Pittenger, 1993; Burnett, 2013; King & Manson, n.d.). The main criticism of MBTI is related to being upon a non-proven theory and a noticeable lack of psychometric support (Pittenger, 1993). Some part of the criticism regarding the MBTI has been addressed on its emphasis on dichotomous scales. Trait theorists disagree with MBTI type theory, which believes that people can be classified into polarised thinking instead of considering the personality constructs as a continuous scale (King & Manson, n.d.).

Among some areas that the MBTI may be useful, it is possible to cite education, counselling, career guidance, and situations requiring cooperation and teamwork (Myers & McCaulley, 1993). Despite extensive use in various organizational settings (as a request of employers, vocational counsellors, and career coaches), the MBTI’s psychometric properties have been under criticism from academic researchers (King & Manson, n.d.). The MBTI is not made for use as a selection instrument in a recruitment process, but many organizations widely use it for that purpose.

DISC test

DISC is a personality test based on the theory of psychologist William Moulton Marston (En, Lan, Tay & Ng, 2011). Tests based on DISC go by different names, such as Thomas PPA, GIA/TST, disc profile etc. Marston did not create an assessment instrument upon his theory. However, based on his model, other people have developed different DISC assessments. Therefore, it is possible to find multiple DISC tests in the marketplace (DISC, n.d.). In his book *Emotions of Normal People*, written in 1928, Marston “explains his theory” on how normal human emotions lead to behavioural differences among groups of people, and how a person’s behaviour might change over time” (DISC, n.d., web).

For Marston, the capital letters D, I, S, and C indicated the motor self’s responses, and they represent nodal points in the integrative emotion series (Marston, 1928). Under his theory, DISC is an acronym where “D” represents dominance, “I” represents Influence, “S” represents steadiness, and “C” represents Conscientiousness (En, Lan, Tay & Ng, 2011). Along with these domains, each trait is distinguished by the general tendency to be whether active or reactive to things (Bradberry, 2007).

Dominant: People with a high dominant trait tend to be direct, assertive, independent, and usually solve problems using a quick and active approach (Bradberry, 2007). The “D” type person seeks out challenges and competition, and dominant people are usually convinced that they can achieve their objectives by using logic and their arguments (Manion, 2012).

Interpersonal: people high in this domain are entertaining, social, extroverted, and outgoing, considering meeting people as a need (Bradberry, 2007). The “I” type of person acts toward the relationships surrounding them and enjoys public recognition (Manion, 2012).

Steady: people with high steadiness do not like surprises, and usually, they are accommodating and consistent in their way of life (Bradberry, 2007). The “S” type person believes that collaboration and mutual support are the keys to maintain stability and harmony. They also can be considered people-pleasers since they enjoy serving others’ needs (Manion, 2012).

Conscientious: people high in this domain are interested in accuracy, enjoying the detail, and focusing on the facts (Bradberry, 2007). The “C” type of person does not have an unmerciful need to socialize. They consider more importance as “clearly defined rules and structured rewards based on quality, accuracy, and individual contribution (Manion, 2012, p.82).

The DISC structure is developed in two parts, and each section assesses one of Marston’s determinants, and each table contains two columns.

The first part will present a view of how outgoing or reserved the person is compared to others. The second part will explore whether a person tends to be more task-oriented or people-oriented (Manion, 2012).

The score achieved through this test does not mean the person is dominant only on that. The dominance of some DISC temperament refers to a general preference, and there is a wide variation on each one (Manion, 2012). This test obtained prominence during the Second World War, whereby access to the recruits’ profiles aimed to designate them to the right assignment. After the war, many soldiers chose the DISC model as a test to be used in civilian life. Thus, the DISC went through some studies and refinements, and it has been used until today (Bradberry, 2007).

For Bradberry (2007), decades of research have led to three significant improvements to the DISC since Marston’s death. The first one is the fact that Marston’s model has been updated to keep the language prevailing. The second improvement is embedded in the fact that all the people are more than just a D, I, S, or C, and that the score does not depict the person in total.

The third innovation ensures that people can be aware of their personality profile with no need for hours of interviews.

Walter Vernon Clarke, another psychologist, was responsible for turning Marston's theory into a behaviour assessment tool. Summarising the DISC concept, it presents two dimensions (Vaida, 2014):

- How people perceive the environment (it can be favourable or unfavourable to them) (Vaida, 2014).
- How people perceive themselves (people can have control or lack it) (Vaida, 2014).

In addition to those dimensions, there are four behavioural tendencies to characterize people: task-oriented, outgoing, reserved, and people-oriented (Rohm, 2015; Vaida, 2014). In general, most people show one or two of these tendencies more significantly throughout life, while the remaining two tendencies do not regularly integrate their behaviour (Vaida, 2014).

The Big-Five Model

The Big-Five Model of personality is the most widely used model of personality structure nowadays. This model considers a set of five personality traits: Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness. These Big Five dimensions develop throughout the life span, and its measures have shown considerable reliability, being useful in areas such as social, occupational, psychological, and health ones (Soto, Kronauer & Liang, 2016). The Five-Factor Model distinguishes itself from other personality theories due to the postulate that only biological factors can affect basic tendencies (Costa & McCrae, 2006). Some researchers consider this theory evolution of the MBTI (Hughes, 2005).

To understand the Big Five Model is necessary to discuss the psychological approach to personality. This approach is based on describing what people do and what people are like, and it may be defined as a glossary of personality (de Raad & Mlačić, 2017). Lexical researchers have described the traits as useful in social interactions since they exist in natural languages (Costa & McCrae, 2006). A typical linguistic study includes the extraction of a representative set of common personality-descriptive adjectives from a dictionary. After that, it is asked for a sample of participants to rate their personality based on these adjectives previously defined. Thus, a factor analysis makes it possible to identify sets of adjectives that go along with the personality dimensions (Soto, Kronauer & Liang, 2016).

Regarding the psychological approach, Raymond Cattell took a mathematical approach to understand personality by using a statistical method defined as "factor analysis." For Cattell, there are sixteen basic personality traits, and his studies resulted in the description of the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire or 16PF that is used until today (Friedman & Schustack, 2001; Bolton & Thompson, 2013). The 16 original factors included in this test are the following (16PF, n.d.):

Warmth
Reasoning
Emotional stability
Dominance
Liveliness
Rule-consciousness
Social boldness
Sensitivity
Vigilance

Abstractedness
Privateness
Apprehensiveness
Openness to change
Self-reliance
Perfectionism
Tension

Cattell was responsible for advancing the psychological research, and he based his studies on reducing one list of 4,504 personality traits by using a meticulous approach (Johnson, 2017).

Cattell's approach to personality theory was settled in rigorously scientific research, relying on observations of behaviour and collecting data on each subject observed. The statistical procedure, the factor analysis, involves assessing the relationship between the data collected from a group of subjects to determine common factors (Schultz & Schultz, 1997). Several psychologists turned to factor analysis due to the effort to reach a more systematic classification of personality traits (Anastasi, 1954).

Factor analysis allows researchers to look simultaneously at any number and type of measure. Therefore, it is possible to determine how to reduce them to patterns (Friedman & Schustack, 2001). The factor analysis begins with a vast number of measurements taken from a sample of people, and the data may include different types of variables. In its studies, the correlation is the cornerstone of factor analysis: when two variables vary together, it is possible to say they are correlated (Hergenhahn & Olson, 1998).

The factors described in factor analysis are called traits, and they represent the mental elements of the personality (Schultz & Schultz, 1997). The traits have been created to understand personality (Engler, 2009). This concept can be defined as a particular aspect of the individuals that tend to be stable through life and consistently given specific situations (Soto, Kronauer & Liang, 2016). McCrae and Costa (2003, p.25) define traits as "dimensions of individual differences in tendencies to show consistent patterns of thoughts, feelings, and actions." Thus, knowing someone's traits enables one to predict how the person will behave in a given situation. By fully understanding a person, it is possible to describe the entire pattern of traits that compose that person as an individual (Schultz & Schultz, 1997).

In summary, Friedman & Schustack (2001) defined traits as more than nominal existence, and it is more generalized than a habit. Also, a trait is dynamic, established empirically, and it is independent of other traits. It cannot be compared to moral or social judgment, and maybe it can be viewed either in the light of the personality or its distribution in the population in general.

Considering the previous Cattell's work as previous research conducted to gather personality traits, more researchers started conducting personality investigations. Some of them reached a similar conclusion: personality consists of five factors. Hence, the researchers Robert McCrae and Paul Costa worked on a project that should identify the Big Five factors of personality, and they confirmed the following ones (Schultz & Schultz, 1997):

Neuroticism: related to the extent of an individual being inclined to experiencing negative emotions, including crucial facets such as anxiety, depression, and emotional volatility. People with low neuroticism tend to remain calm and optimistic, and they can easily regulate their emotions (Soto, Kronauer & Liang, 2016). Neurotic people tend to experience negative emotions and feelings, including anxiety, depression, and anger (Furnham, Moutafi & Crump, 2003).

Extraversion: related to the extent of an individual being talkative and outgoing in social situations. Commonly, people with this trait tend to be conversational, lead groups, and express emotions. On the other hand, introverted people may feel uncomfortable in social situations and keep their feeling to themselves (Soto, Kronauer & Liang, 2016). The extrovert tends to have high activity and social skills (Furnham, Moutafi & Crump, 2003).

Openness: related to the individual's intellectual and experiential life, including crucial facets such as aesthetic sensitivity, imagination, and intellect. People with low openness tend to choose the routine instead of experiencing new things and inclining themselves to the familiarity (Soto, Kronauer & Liang, 2016)

Agreeableness: such as extraversion, agreeableness is related to social behaviour, and it concerns the extent of an individual capacity to maintain pleasant and harmonious interpersonal relations. This factor includes some facets, such as compassion, politeness, and trust. People with low agreeableness tend to hold grudges and look down on others (Soto, Kronauer & Liang, 2016).

Conscientiousness: related to the individual's capacity to organize tasks, and it involves critical facets such as orderliness, self-discipline, and reliability. People with low conscientiousness tend to have difficulty controlling their impulses and typically easily distracted (Soto, Kronauer & Liang, 2016).

The Big Five measure is typically done through self-report or peer-report questionnaires (Soto, Kronauer & Liang, 2016). McCrae and Costa's research developed the NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI), the first alternative set of Big-Five markets (Goldberg, 1992). When we refer to cross-cultural considerations, it is essential to mention that the NEO inventories are available in over 40 languages. The published versions include local normative information with manuals (Costa & McCrae, 2008).

Initially, the NEO Personality Inventory measured six parts of three global domains (Neuroticism, Extraversion, and Openness) of personality. The total score was obtained by summing the count of those six parts in each global domain (Costa & McCrae, 1985). However, the NEO Personality Inventory-Revised (NEO-PI-R) consists of 240 items that assess 30 specific traits, including agreeableness and conscientiousness. Its validation is attested by the results published in over 2,000 studies distributed in articles, chapters, and books (Costa & McCrae, 2008). It became the most universally used personality test in the Five-Factor Model research (Johnson, 2017).

It is important to define that the NEO-PI-R is a measure of personality traits, and it cannot be considered a psychopathology symptom measure. However, the NEO-PI-R helps clinical practice suggest hypotheses about the disorders and their possible therapy responses (Costa & McCrae, 2008).

Among the options correlated to the NEO-PI-R, the Alva's Lab test has been shown an excellent option to choose because they have developed a test that captures the same dimensions of personality as the NEO-PI-R. After some research and a validity study for both construct and predictive validity, they have shown that the 15 facets chosen on their test had high correlations with the corresponding facets in NEO-PI-R (Pihl, 2020). The Cubiks test for personality developed in the early 1960s. PAPI was one of the first personality inventories designed exclusively for selection and development in the workplace. Since then, PAPI has seen several revisions, the latest putting a strong emphasis on being a cross-culturally valid system. PAPI is aligned to the five-factor model - adapted to fit an occupational setting. It adds validated competencies to facilitate interpretation, is certified by the British Psychological Society, Det Norske Veritas, and more.

Another tool with a lot of history and research behind it is Assessio's personality assessment called MAP. MAP is directly translated from the theoretical framework Five Factor Model. It measures five main scales and in total 25 subscales. Its construct validity has been confirmed through several processes, one of them including correlation analyses towards the NEO-PI-R. Additionally, the technical manual provides information on criterion-related validity where managerial performance amongst other KPI's has been proven to be predictable with the use of MAP. Since the launch of the tool, Assessio has, together with its partners, conducted several Performance Insight Studies where they have concluded clear predictability of MAP towards various KPI's across various roles, organizations and industries.

Conclusion

A person's work success will include several factors, such as ability and motivation. Moreover, personality is formed as one of these factors that will influence individual performance at work. Therefore, no ideal personality profile will suit the company's needs if the other features do not follow the same rule (Furnham, 2008).

Personality tests aim to measure personality characteristics by using questionnaires developed under theoretical and statistical techniques (Engler, 2009). Another approach is through the application of performance or situational tests, and the subject is related to perform a task whose purpose is generally disguised (Anastasi, 1954). Each personality test consists of its procedures to identify similarities and differences, considering a person's characteristics and capacities, describing strengths and weaknesses (Weiner & Greene, 2017). In summary, considering psychological testing terminology, the designation "personality test" refers to measuring characteristics such as emotional adjustment, social relations, motivation, interests, attitude, and other related (Anastasi, 1954).

For Engler (2009), the validity of a test is a difficult criterion to meet. With the same importance, reliability indicates the test consistency through time (Archer & Smith, 2008). Therefore, choosing a test that will suit the organization's needs is vital for a successful outcome.

The fact that everyone differs from another person in different job performance levels makes this decision essential for organizations to identify and hire the right person with the highest performance (Sjöberg, 2014). For Furnham (2008), the answer to the question, "Why do people use psychological tests in recruitment" is simple: to help make a better decision. Indeed, choosing a test and making the most accurate decision whether to hire a person or not is the primary duty of personnel selection. It needs to be based on comparisons between the applicants and predicting the level of their future job performance (Sjöberg, 2014). Consequently, it is necessary to consider the pros and cons of the tests, evaluating their characteristics, and their applicability to the goal that has been set.

Among the personality tests present in this article, the MBTI is not made for selection but is widely used for that purpose anyway by many organizations, and it is commonly compared with the Five-Factor model of personality (King & Manson, n.d.; Furnham, Moutafi & Crump, 2003). However, they have their differences, as already presented in this article. Regarding the Five-Factor model, some researchers have given a precise scenario of its genetic origin, development, and ability to predict life outcomes (Johnson, 2017); and in judging personality, psychologists often refer to the Big Five personality traits (Jenkins, 2001). The Big Five Factor is the personality theory that personality psychologists have extensively accepted (Hughes, 2005). Research has shown the Big Five measure with considerable reliability and acceptance, being used in a variety of areas (Soto, Kronauer & Liang, 2016).

Upon a wide and deep range of studies involving trait-descriptive terms, the five markers have been consistently acceptable and verified by empirical evidence (Goldberg, 1992). Scientific Americans mention that the Big Five Model does not sort people into a “type,” but where they are allocated on a continuum of personality traits (Chen, 2018).

Through the years, researchers have been consensus on the Big Five Model (Roberts, 1997). On the other hand, both Myer Briggs and DISC developed without a scientific method, as mentioned in numerous studies and websites specialized, and it has become a weakness to them. The Scientific American, for instance, notes on its website that besides the popularity of the MBTI, it is a dubious commercial successfully personality test that gives false information, with confused and poorly worded questions (Chen, 2018). Regarding the DISC, there is a massive variety of this assessment. Each one has different processes to determine its score and generate the report; therefore, the levels of quality and reliability are different, making it difficult to determine its accuracy.

Pittenger (1993) affirms that the MBTI has wide use; however, there is also significant research that examines the validity of this test. Bailey (2007) asserts that some tests should not be used in recruitment, and the MBTI is one of them. For the author, the MBTI is a questionnaire that needs to be used only in development situations since it indicates a person’s likely personality type with not the deep detail level appropriate for recruitment.

When it comes to the DISC assessment, this is an inexpensive and easy test to use. However, it does not have the accuracy to predict performance at a job due to its measures of common behavioural tendencies only, not going into specific skills or factors to any position. The success of the MBTI and DISC test in selection in recruitment can be explained by that the results are often a case of the Barnum Effect. The outcome of the test sounds so accurate to you, and you naturally believe them. The truth is that what those outputs describe are very generic traits that you and a large proportion of your peers possess. It is a common psychological phenomenon whereby individuals give high accuracy ratings to descriptions of their personality that supposedly are tailored specifically to them, which are vague and general enough to apply to a wide range of people. These aren’t nuanced, catered, or introspective observations about you and your work. They are generic generalizations that should not be taken as credible outcomes.

As already mentioned in this article, the NEO-Personality Inventory-Revised, or just NEO-PI-R, is considered the best measure of the five dimensions. It also measures differentiating facets of each of these dimensions, providing a relevant result on its application (Archer & Smith, 2008).

Measurement using psychological testing in recruitment and selection roles is relevant when this procedure is considered an objective with a level of reliability and validity in measurement (Baron, Melania & Agustina, 2020). Considering these requirements, Assessments based on Big Five Model test is the most studied and accepted theory in the personality test area. Lastly, its empirical evidence provides a guaranty of reliability and validity, making this test one of the few suitable tests for recruitment. GMA/aptitude tests are also proven to predict workplace performance and should also be used for selection.

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