How Personality Assessments are valuable for Recruitment: Sub Investigation into Prominent Personality Traits.

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Abstract

This study investigates the predictive power of personality traits in employee performance and recruitment decisions using the Eysenck Personality Profiler (EPP-V6). A sample of 40 newly hired government sector employees was assessed, identifying tough-mindedness, assertiveness, dependence, and low aggression as key traits. These traits were found to enhance leadership, teamwork, and resilience. Tough-mindedness, linked to logical decision-making and emotional stability, aids in high-pressure environments. Assertiveness fosters collaboration and productivity, while low aggression contributes to a harmonious workplace culture. Balanced dependence supports effective teamwork and organisational cohesion. The study underscores the value of personality assessments in recruitment, enabling informed decisions and better role alignment. By integrating personality profiling with cognitive ability tests, organisations can optimise candidate selection and workplace efficiency. These findings highlight the critical role of personality traits in enhancing organisational performance and success.

Keywords: Personality traits, recruitment, EPP-V6, employee performance, workplace efficiency.

One can question if personality traits are capable of predicting the performance of the employee in the company and if they are valuable for recruitment purposes. This topic has been the central focus of organisational psychology and human resource management. Personality Assessments are extremely valuable as they enable understanding and evaluate personality traits such as individual differences in characteristics, traits, and behaviours. They help in understanding personality structure and predicting outcomes in various domains. Common assessments include self-report questionnaires and projective tests (John & Srivastava, 1999; McCrae & Costa, 2004).

Personality assessments can significantly enhance hiring decisions, training programs, and overall functioning of workplace efficiency. While personality assessments were first introduced during the First World War to address post traumatic stress disorder there are now multiple forms of personality assessments available; self report measures, projective tests questionnaire etc (Mizzi, 2022). There are also multiple examples of modern psychological personality assessments such as the Eysenck's Personality Profiler published in 1963, a commercial test by Hans and Sybil B. G. or the Big 5 Factor personality analysis.

For this current study, we are using the tool- Eysenck's Personality Profiler (EPP-V6) which provides a framework for analysing traits like: emotionality, extraversion , adventurousness. These dimensions include an array of actions and feelings that an employee's performance is dependent on. Extraversion, for instance, is often associated with sociability, assertiveness, expressiveness and ambition traits that are highly beneficial in roles requiring teamwork and interpersonal communication (Eysenck et al., 2012). For instance If sociability is a trait in question where a marketing role needs to be filled, low scorer's are less sociable and high scores are highly sociable ; people with high scores would have an inclination towards the company of other people and would be comfortable with selling to people, excelling in it.

Emotionality, on the other hand, can assure emotional stability and the susceptibility to deal with psychological distress in a job candidate. Adventurousness, though less commonly discussed in organisational settings, includes traits such as risk taking and impulsiveness. While high psychoticism can be detrimental, moderate levels may be beneficial in highly competitive environments. The long term value of personality assessments are that they allow identifying key personality traits that influence job

performance, employers can make more informed hiring decisions, ensuring a better fit between candidates and job roles (Schmidt & Hunter, 1998).

Research suggests that certain traits, such as conscientiousness and emotional stability (low score in neuroticism), are consistently parallel to job performance across various industries and roles (Barrick & Mount, 1991).

The predictive validity of these personality assessments is an extremely important component as it refers to their ability to predict one's job performance. A number of studies have validated this predictive power. In terms of their predictive ability, conscientiousness and emotional stability have a moderate ability to predict the performance of the job. By adding the GMA (General Mental Ability) test, these factors tend to be zero except conscientiousness and openness to experience respectively as the ability of GMA to predict performance tends to increase as the cognitive demands of jobs increase. Highest validities are seen for professional and managerial roles, where GMA is able to account for over 50 per cent of the variability in job performance on average (Davies W. & Mcdonald A., 2018).

For example, a meta-analysis published by Schmidt and Hunter (1998) found that personality tests, when combined with cognitive ability tests, ace the accuracy of predicting job performance. The Big 5 factor analysis resulted in conscientiousness showing consistent correlation with job performance criteria for occupational groups. Extraversion was a valid predictor for two occupations that involve social interaction, sales and management. Additionally, Openness to experience and extraversion were valid predictors and hence, positively correlated with higher risk tendencies (Henderson et al., 2021).

Another research analysed personality traits and predicted team performance by O'Neil and Allen concluded that Conscientiousness and its facets were successful predictors of team performance. Agreeableness, Extraversion and Neuroticism were not predictive of team performance, whereas Openness had a modest negative relation with team performance (O'Neill & Allen, 2011). A study conducted with 363 managers from public and private sector organisations in North India found that conscientiousness and agreeableness were significant predictors of career identity as it indicated how Indian managers who are focused, identify well with their career line. Agreeableness from the Big Five personality dimension was found to have a positive and significant influence on career planning. Hence, authors inferred that tendency to get along well with others significantly helped Indian managers in enhancing their career planning (Arora & Rangnekar, 2016).

Methodology

Sampling: This study employed a purposive sampling method to select participants who were recently hired for a job in the government sector. The sample consisted of 40 individuals who had successfully passed the selection process, ensuring that they met the job requirements and exhibited desirable traits for the role.

Participants: The participants included 40 newly selected employees, comprising both males and females. These individuals were chosen to represent a diverse range of backgrounds and experiences, providing a comprehensive overview of the personality traits prevalent among those selected for government sector jobs.

Administration: In a comfortable seating environment with proper ventilation, general instructions were provided and the test items were presented one by one. Respondents enter their answers on a three-point scale ("Yes", "No", "Can't decide"). As soon as an answer has been entered the next item appears. It is not possible to correct preceding items.

Measures :

For Form S1 the reliability scores (internal consistency) range from r=0.56 (tough-mindedness) to r=0.85 (inferiority, unhappiness) for men and from r=0.41 (tough mindedness) to r=0.89 (unhappiness) for women. For Form S2, reliability ranges from r=0.68 (irresponsibility) to r=0.89 (unhappiness) for women and from r=0.74 (assertiveness) to r=0.85 (unhappiness) for men.

Factor analysis reveals a clear three-factor structure. The emotionality factor explains 27.2% of the variance, the adventure factor 17.9% and the extraversion factor 10.1% (cumulatively 55.1%). These findings were replicated by Eysenck, Barrett, Wilson & Jackson (1992) and Costa & McCrae (1995). In addition, Costa & McCrae (1995) provide some alternative factor solutions that are of particular interest with regard to the Five Factor theory.

Objective:

To assess if personality assessments are valuable for recruitment purposes using EPP6 and to analyse the most prominent traits out of the sample of 40 people who were selected for a job in the government sector.

Results and Discussion

	aggression	assertiveness
aggression Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	1.00	.502a .001
	aggression	assertiveness
N	40	40
assertiveness Pearsons Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.502a .001 40	1.000 40

	N	Mean	Std Dev	Variance	Kurtosis	S.E. Kurt	Skewness	S.E. Skew	Minimum	Maximum
anxiety	40	22.30	20.07	402.73	1.93	.73	1.45	.37	.00	83.00
dependence	40	36.92	26.40	696.79	-.85	.73	.48	.37	3.00	90.00
impulsiveness	40	18.80	16.91	285.86	3.59	.73	1.61	.37	.00	82.00
irresponsibility	40	12.82	13.99	195.79	3.97	.73	1.84	.37	.00	65.00
tough mindedness	40	60.77	26.42	697.82	-1.37	.73	-.28	.37	13.00	98.00
assertiveness	40	36.92	19.60	384.33	1.85	.73	1.19	.37	11.00	96.00
aggression	40	35.27	26.01	676.82	.38	.73	1.11	.37	5.00	100.00

An exploratory assessment was conducted using EPP6 to find the most prominent traits from a group of 40 participants who were selected for a job in the public sector. Upon evaluation through descriptive statistics we found that *Tough Mindedness, Assertiveness, Dependence and Aggression* were the four most prominent traits in our sample size who got selected for the job. To explore the relevance of these characteristics with Job success and recruitment we did an in depth literature review.

Tough Mindedness includes making appraisals, drawing conclusions, and deciding based on logic, facts, and data rather than feelings, values and intuition; disposition to be analytical, realistic, objective, and unsentimental (Lounsbury et al., 2014) All four of these above traits are necessary for leadership positions.

In the 1992 manual by Costa and McCrae, it gave a comprehensive overview of tough-mindedness as part of their Revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R) and NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI). That associated tough-mindedness with facets of the

conscientiousness and neuroticism dimensions, reflecting an individual's traits such as resilience, practical thinking, and emotional stability. Tough-minded individuals are those who are less likely to be swayed by external influences or emotional decisions, enabling them to handle stress and maintain focus on their goals,effectively (McCrae & Costa, 2010). These individuals were categorised to be disciplined and objective, often excelling in environments that required critical thinking and resilience. This manual emphasised that tough-mindedness is a key trait for roles involving high-pressure decision-making and leadership, as it enables individuals to navigate challenges with composure and determination. The trait's association with conscientiousness highlights attributes like reliability and goal-orientation, while its link to lower neuroticism underscores emotional stability and stress resistance.

Assertiveness involves standing up for personal rights and expressing thoughts, feelings and beliefs in direct, honest, and appropriate ways which respect the rights of other people (Peneva & Mavrodiev, 2013). It was discussed how job performance is a result of many factors including job satisfaction, job involvement, organisational commitment, workplace culture ,etc. Positive assertion by employees enhances productivity and in turn organisational productivity(Sarkar, J. 2013).

As positive assertion by employees is the epicentre of a productive organisational culture. It enhances individual performance by improving communication, collaboration, and confidence while reducing stress and conflicts amongst employees. These individual benefits accumulate, leading to a more efficient and harmonious workplace, ultimately boosting overall organisational productivity.

Analysing our results, individuals who were high on assertiveness were selected for the role which will play a dominant role as one would be able to work and function without trampling on others responsibilities. More evidence has been found to suspect a negative relation between assertiveness and exhaustion than a positive relation or no relation(Slöetjes, 2012).

The model revealed that self-esteem had a significant influence on trait interpersonal dependency and trait depression but did not impact state interpersonal dependency or state depression (Takagishi et al., 2011). Trait interpersonal dependency refers to a stable, long-term pattern of reliance on others for emotional support and validation, while trait

depression is a consistent tendency towards depressive symptoms, so interpersonal dependency as a trait is much beneficial for team-work and office. Self-esteem refers to an individual's overall self-evaluation of his/her competencies (Rosenberg, 1965). High self-esteem reduces these stable traits by fostering a more secure and independent self-view, and reducing chronic feelings of inadequacy and sadness.(Kuster et al., 2013) However, self-esteem did not affect state interpersonal dependency or state depression, which are temporary and situation-specific fluctuations in dependency and depressive symptoms.

Lastly, for aggression; to explore further relations we did a Pearson correlation and found aggression and assertiveness are moderately positively correlated with each other , "psychological aggression at work negatively predicted both task performance and contextual performance"(Schat et al,.2011). Psychological aggression at work creates a toxic environment that hampers both task performance and contextual performance. By inducing stress, emotional exhaustion, and dissatisfaction, it reduces employees' ability to focus on their tasks and their willingness to engage in behaviours that support effective organisational functioning . It has a negative impact on employee well-being, motivation, and interpersonal relationships.

Recruiters prefer individuals with lower aggression levels to ensure a productive, harmonious, and positive work environment. This strategic hiring approach enhances organisational effectiveness and promotes a culture of mutual respect and collaboration. Both individual and situational factors predict aggression and that the pattern of predictors is target specific (Hershcovis,M. S.,et al2007). Therefore, both individual and situational factors contribute to the prediction of aggression, and these factors interact in complex ways to influence aggressive behaviour. The specific pattern of predictors varies depending on the context and characteristics of the target, highlighting the importance of considering the nuanced interplay between personal dispositions and environmental cues in understanding and managing aggression.

For example, an employee works in a high-pressure sales environment where achieving targets is critical for performance evaluations and bonuses and he/she has a history of high neuroticism and low agreeableness, making them prone to emotional instability and interpersonal conflicts as low agreeableness would make one less cooperative and more

confrontational, increasing the likelihood of aggressive responses.. Hence, it is of the most importance that a job recruiter focuses on aggression as an underlying trait.

Conclusion

To conclude, this study emphasised the critical role personality tests play in predicting employee performance during the recruitment process. Profiler (EPP-V6), was used in this study by us to provide insights into traits like emotionality, extraversion, and adventurousness, which hold a significant importance when it comes to understanding job performance and suitability for specific roles. Analysing our study shows that traits such as conscientiousness, emotional stability, and extraversion are strong predictors of job performance, with conscientiousness showing a consistent correlation across various occupational groups. Additionally, the study found that traits like assertiveness, tough-mindedness, and low aggression are critical for leadership and high-pressure roles, indicating that personality assessments can guide organisations in short listing candidates who are well-suited for the demands of their positions.

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