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A psychological study of the relationship between personality assessment for
selection and change in self-perception

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Abstract

The use of personality assessments in employee selection is a growing global trend. However, there are numerous controversies in the literature regarding its utility and potential impacts. In addition, many of the ways in which personality assessments are being used in selection are neither aligned with research evidence, nor constrained by a code of ethics or extensive training.

The selection process itself is not focused on the wellbeing of job applicants. This is one possible reason why little to no research has investigated the potential effects of personality assessment for selection on job applicants' self-perception.

A review of the literature reveals several possible mechanisms for occupational personality assessment as an antecedent to change in self-perception, including positive and negative events, induced behaviour and biased scanning, and response construction.

This thesis investigates the relationship between the assessment of an individual's personality, and change to that individual's self-perception, across two independent sub-projects.

In Sub-project A, self-perception was assessed for a group of job applicants before and after completion of a personality assessment within a selection process.

In Sub-project B, self-perception was assessed for a group of students before and after completion of a personality assessment and receipt of a written results/feedback report.

The findings for both sub-projects demonstrate evidence of change to self-perception and support for personality assessment for selection as an antecedent to change in self-perception.

Possible explanations for these results are examined in relation to the mechanisms listed above. The limitations of the current studies are discussed and avenues for future research are recommended.

Sub-projects A and B represent a unique contribution to the literature in relation to both personality assessment in organisational settings, and self-perception change.

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Table of Contents

Abstract	iii
Acknowledgements	v
List of Figures	ix
List of Tables	xi
1 Introduction	1
1.1 The research context	1
1.2 The research problem	5
1.3 The current research	7
2 Literature review	9
2.1 Personality assessment	9
2.2 Selection	23
2.3 Self-perception	31
3 Hypotheses	41
3.1 Operationalisation of the dependent variable	41
3.2 Changes to the research design	41
3.3 Hypotheses	45
4 Sub-project A	48
4.1 Sub-project A: Method	48
4.2 Sub-project A: Results	74
5 Sub-project B	79
5.1 Sub-project B: Method	79
5.2 Sub-project B: Results.....	92
6 Discussion	97
6.1 Outcomes of hypothesis testing.....	97
6.2 Integrating results for Sub-Projects A and B	99
6.3 Relating New Zealand findings to published models and results.....	102
6.4 Limitations of the current research.....	109
6.5 Considerations for future research	117
Appendices	119

Note: A list of references can be found in Appendix 1.

List of Figures

Figure 1: Original design sequence

Figure 2: Sub-project A sequence

Figure 3: Sub-project B sequence

List of Tables

Table 1: Sex – Sub-project A

Table 2: Age group – Sub-project A

Table 3: Ethnicity – Sub-project A

Table 4: Previous experience of personality assessment(s) –Sub-project A

Table 5: Reason(s) for prior completion of personality assessment(s) – Sub-project A

Table 6: Sex – Sub-project B

Table 7: Age group – Sub-project B

Table 8: Ethnicity – Sub-project B

Table 9: Previous experience of personality assessment(s) –Sub-project B

Table 10: Reason(s) for prior completion of personality assessment(s) – Sub-project B

Table 11: Procedural rule indicators

Table 12: Comparison of participant groups' Sex with Labour Force

Table 13: Comparison of participant groups' Age group with Labour Force

Table 14: Comparison of participant groups' Ethnicity with Labour Force

