Big Five personality factors and the prediction of behavior: A multitrait–multimethod approach

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Abstract
We investigated the construct validities of three, quite diverse, Big Five personality questionnaires using confirmatory factor analysis applied to multitrait–multimethod data. Participants (N = 295) completed three different personality questionnaires: the NEO Five-Factor Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1992), the Five-Factor Nonverbal Personality Questionnaire (Paunonen, Jackson, & Ashton, 2004), and a 50-item bipolar adjective rating form (Goldberg, 1992). They also completed a behavior report form as a separate criterion measure. The multitrait–multimethod analyses provided evidence for the convergent validity and, to a lesser extent, the discriminant validity of the Big Five personality measures. Criterion-related validities of the Big Five measures were also supported.
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1. Introduction
The Big Five model of personality structure (or the Five-Factor Model) has received tremendous empirical interest over the past several years. As a consequence, some consensus is emerging among personality researchers with regard to its components (Digman, 1990; John & Srivastava, 1999) and its role in explaining a wide variety of important life outcomes (Ozer & Benet-Martinez, 2006; Paunonen, 2003). Accompanying the plethora of research on the Big Five, researchers have developed a number of different measures that purportedly define the model (see De Raad & Perugini, 2002). Those measures include, to name a few, the NEO Personality Inventory – Revised and the NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-PI-R and NEO-FFI; Costa et al., 1992), the Five-Factor Nonverbal Personality Questionnaire (FF-NPQ; Paunonen, Ashton, & Jackson, 2001; Paunonen, Jackson, & Ashton, 2004) and Big Five adjective trait markers (Goldberg, 1992).

Despite a general consensus regarding the structure of personality, subtle differences still exist among different five-factor conceptualizations and operationalizations. Some of those differences have arisen as a result of divergent historical and methodological backgrounds associated with different research traditions (see John & Srivastava, 1999, and McCrae & John, 1992, for reviews). We refer here to the search for personality structure through (a) the analysis of the words we use to describe one another, the so-called lexical approach, or (b) the analysis of the scales and inventories we use to measure people, the so-called questionnaire approach (e.g., see De Raad & Perugini, 2002).

One of the disparities in different flavors of the Five-Factor Model concerns the interpretation of the smallest of the Big Five factors. The lexical tradition in Big Five research has concluded that the fifth factor should be called
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