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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 on 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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