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**A Critical Analysis of Big Five Personality Theory**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Through a lengthy history of conceptual and applied research in a variety of fields, this study aims to give a comprehensive and in-depth overview of the literature on the big five characteristics (BFT). These studies were conducted using large samples of people, groups, and nations. Because the BFT is the model for describing the structure of personality traits that is the most widely accepted, the purpose of this study was to identify them in order to achieve a better understanding of them and so that researchers can take them into consideration when conducting their future studies. The eight most important observations pertaining to the BFT were the primary subject of this review. The significance of the traits, the background of the BFT model, the unity or hierarchy of the traits, the quantity of the traits, the three viewpoints on BFT, the BFT surveys, the relationship between BFT and performance, and the requirement for a sixth feature are these findings. The findings of the study unequivocally shown that there are flaws in universal models, which have a propensity to generalize a constrained number of characteristics in order to provide an interpretation of personality that is applicable across national boundaries and cultural contexts.*

**Keywords:** Big Five Personality, Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Performance.

**1.0 Introduction**

Psychology debates how to characterize individual differences. The five-factor model of personality, sometimes known as the Big 5 model, is the most popular of these theories (Cattell, 1946; Eysenck & Eysenck, 1968; Goldberg, 1990). The Big Five are conscientiousness, extraversion, neuroticism, agreeableness, and openness to experience. Conscientious people are responsible, diligent, and perseverant (Barrick & Mount, 1991), systematic, dependable, and risk-averse, diligent people (Goldberg, 1990) while extraversion includes talkativeness, assertiveness, activity, ambition, and expressiveness (Barrick & Mount, 1991) and neuroticism includes anxiety, despair, rage, humiliation, concern, and insecurity (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Openness comprises imagination, culture, curiosity, originality, open-mindedness, intellect, and aesthetic sensitivity (Barrick & Mount, 1991).

Numerous studies employ the Big 5 personality characteristics to evaluate personality. This model of personality has been linked to many psychological

outcomes, including job performance (Barrick & Mount, 1991), relationship satisfaction (O'Meara & South, 2019), leadership (Judge & Bono, 2000), internet addiction (Kayış et al., 2016), education outcomes (Noftle & Robins, 2007), and health consequences (Jerram & Coleman, 1999). The Big 5 model's cross-cultural replicability and test-retest reliability (Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann Jr., 2003) support its usage as a personality taxonomy.

**2.0 Significance and Purpose of Study**

The Big Five paradigm dominates personality research. Researchers often evaluate personality using the Big 5 traits. Replicating earlier findings and using a widespread personality model without doubt is easy. The Big Five model has produced unexpected personality effects, exaggerating its scope is problematic. Researchers commonly imply evaluating or controlling personality by examining the Big 5 (Anglim & O'Connor, 2019). The language used to explain personality gives the impression that the Big 5 has covered all essential personality differences.

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Thus, this personality definition ignores personality traits outside the Big 5. This article challenges this widespread misinterpretation of the Big 5 model as a comprehensive personality model and provides examples of different personality models that contain additional broad personality attributes and minor personality aspects. Thus, this article should critically investigate and resolve personality comprehensiveness issues. This paper will critically evaluate if the Big 5 model is enough to understand personality, or whether we need to look at more personality traits.

### 3.0 Literature Review

Previous studies reviews the big five traits (BFT) literature based on a lengthy history of conceptual and applied research in numerous disciplines including large samples of individuals, organizations, and nations. The BFT is the most widely used model for characterizing personality traits, therefore this study identified them for better understanding and future research. The BFT's eight key observations were analyzed.

These observations cover the relevance of characteristics, the history of the BFT model, the unity or hierarchy of traits, the number of features, three views on BFT, BFT surveys, BFT and performance, and the need for a sixth trait. Universal theories that generalize a few characteristics make personality interpretation across cultures difficult. The big five strategy ignores some important traits. How does personality evolve with age? Our personalities are steady as we get older. Due to the specificity of test answers, it might be difficult to draw broad conclusions from them. This makes implementing the knowledge difficult (Abood, 2019.)

Cross-cultural personality studies include definitional and measurement issues. Researchers investigate numerous personality theories and give definitions to integrate current literatures. Due to space limits, focus was on the global concept of personality, especially the Big Five dimensions (neuroticism, extraversion, conscientiousness, openness, and agreeableness; McCrae & Costa, 1997), rather than narrower definitions or traits (Funder, 1991).

Including personality, characteristics, temperament, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and other

cognitive and affective categories that are relatively stable and reflect holistic or partial elements of an individual requires numerous volumes to evaluate and analyze this enormous body of research. Several extensive reviews and criticisms are also suggested (e.g., Heine & Buchtel, 2009; Piekola, 2011; Triandis & Suh, 2002). Big Five was focused because of the vast variety of personality traits and cultural views. Much of what is described applies to personality theory analysis. Instead of analyzing cultural differences inside countries or demographic variances, academics analyze the FFM across ethnic/racial groupings from different nations (e.g., sex, social class). (Carlo, et al., 2014).

While the two largest factors—Anxiety/Neuroticism and Extraversion—appear to have been universally accepted (e.g., in the pioneering factor-analytic work of R. B. Cattell, H. J. Eysenck, J. P. Guilford, and A. L. Comrey), the present critique suggests that the FFM provides a less than optimal account of human personality structure. Saucier and Goldberg (2001) observed various issues with the Big Five personality characteristics, and Saucier (2002, p. 1) concluded that “it is not yet evident that this is the ‘optimal’ model. Reproducible, cross-culturally generalizable, comprehensive, and helpful, the ideal model (cf. De Raad & Perugini, 2002).

Paunonan and Jackson (2000) discovered in adjectival data that Conservativeness, Honesty, Deceptiveness, Conceit, Masculinity-Femininity, Thriftiness, Humorousness, Sensuality, and Religiosity fell outside the Big Five. Boyle et al. (1995) criticized Costa and McCrae (1992) for employing procrustean factor-analytic methods to get Big Five model components (Block, 1995; Boyle, 1997). The FFM depicts personality as stagnant (Terracciano et al., 2006). According to McCrae and Costa, healthy children have personality qualities that last beyond 30 years (1999, p. 145). Soldz and Vaillant (1999) observed significant 45-year test-retest correlations for Neuroticism, Extraversion, and Openness but not Agreeableness and Conscientiousness.

The Big Five personality traits fluctuate dramatically over maturity, as the strong test-retest correlations explained just a small part of the variance. The great personality psychologists (Cattell, Allport, Murray) felt personality dispositions developed, suggesting the FFM model may be outmoded (Roberts, 2006). Personality

structure changes during life (e.g., see Cattell et al., 2002; Fraley & Roberts, 2005; Roberts et al., 2006a,b). Adulthood increases Agreeableness and Conscientiousness and decreases Extraversion, Neuroticism, and Openness to Experience, according to McCrae and Terracciano (2005). (cf. Srivastava et al., 2003). In a comprehensive meta-analysis of over 100 longitudinal studies on personality trait stability (Roberts et al., 2006a,b), mean trait levels varied over the lifespan, even in the elderly. Linear and curved alterations were common (Openness to Experience grew throughout youth but declined in old life). Structured-personality-learning theory (Cattell, 1983, 1996; Cattell et al., 2002) states that adult personality learning continues. Empirical evidence contradicts McCrae and Costa's (1999) "set in plaster" argument that personality learning ceases at 30.

Costa & McCrae (1992) questioned the Big Five's robustness and basicness. Lexical investigations have not shown Openness to Experience. Lexical and psychophysiological methods have found non-Big Five component combinations (see Boyle et al., 1995; McKenzie et al., 1997). A cluster analysis of Cattellian personality trait intercorrelations produced Costa and McCrae's first three-dimensional (NEO) solution (McKenzie, 1998, p. 479). Cluster analysis displays surface symptom groupings, not source characteristics. Some factor analytically oriented personality researchers (Cattell, 1995; Comrey, 1993) have proposed additional trait dimensions, however Hofstee et al. (1992), Marusik et al. (1996), and Piedmont and Chae (1997) have tentatively supported the FFM (1997).

Intercultural studies analyze cultural traits and their interactions with cultural components. Geert Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions—Individualism, Power Distance, Masculinity, and Uncertainty Avoidance—correlate with a nation's average Big Five scores. For instance, the degree to which a society emphasizes Individualism correlates with its average Extraversion, whereas those who live in societies with large power imbalances have higher Conscientiousness ratings. Thus, FFT views personality traits as inherited biological traits. According to study, nationalities tend to share personal traits. In multiethnic countries like Russia, citizens of one community or sovereign republic

have similar traits. Matches also occur in neighbouring countries with comparable languages or ethnicities. The FFT holds that persons develop distinctive adaptations (thoughts, feelings, and actions) based on their location on the five basic features and their environment. The five fundamental tendencies may change throughout life, but specific adaptations may not. Some scholars say the FFM is not a complete personality theory (or scarcely a theory at all) (Novikova, 2013).

Block (2010) summarized criticisms of the Big Five model as follows: 1) the atheoretic nature of the five-factors; 2) the "cloudy" measurement of the five factors; 3) the model's inadequacy for studying early childhood; 4) the use of factor analysis as the exclusive paradigm for conceptualizing personality; 5) the continuing non-consensual understandings of the five factors; and 6) the existence of various unrecognized but successful efforts to specify aspect relationships.

#### 4.0 A Comparison with other Personality Model

The Big Five personality model has been widely used for decades. In order to identify what is "beyond the Big 5," this article analyses the history and popularity of the Big 5 model and the position of personality traits not included in it. Researchers first compare the Big 5 to the six-factor HEXACO model, the Supernumerary Personality Traits, and a psychobiological personality model. Then, lesser personality traits like the Dark Tetrad, self-defeating interpersonal styles, and trait emotional intelligence predict outcomes beyond the Big 5. Comparisons between various personality models and the extent to which other personality qualities can predict distinct psychological consequences will help determine if the Big 5 is a suitable measure of personality or if a more complete model is needed. Big 5 personality researchers will be considered. An investigation of alternative personality models and restricted personality traits found several personality dimensions outside of the Big 5 factor category. Correlational overlap and predictive advantages (e.g., incremental validity, substantial predictions) proved the uniqueness of these alternative personality qualities.) (Feher, and Vernon, 2021).

Some psychologists believe personality requires more than five traits. HEXACO, by Kibeom Lee and Michael Ashton (2004), expands the Big Five Model.

HEXACO retains the Big Five Model's main traits but adds Honesty-Humility, defined as the degree to which an individual puts others' needs before their own. Unlike the introvert-extrovert dichotomy, the Big Five Model views personality traits as a continuum. Thus, people are put on a five-dimensional scale with two extremes (Lim, 2020). The most popular framework is the Big Five. Its cross-culturally verified matrix of traits and personality variables have been praised. The model matches self-description and observational data and has been used as a theoretical foundation in human-robot interaction research on robot operators' personalities. (Connor-Smith, and Flachsbart, 2007).

### 5.0 Big Five Personality Traits: A Critical View

Extraversion and Neuroticism were best predicted Oxford in Happiness Inventory scores, whereas Neuroticism and Conscientiousness predicted Satisfaction with Life Scale scores. These results show that neuroticism and extraversion impact well-being. The findings also suggest that conscientiousness affects subjective well-being. Costa and McCrae related extraversion and neuroticism to happiness (1980). More research confirms these links (Chan and Joseph, 2000, Furnham and Brewin, 1990, Hills and Argyle, 2001a, Hills and Argyle, 2001b, Lu and Shih, 1997). Extraversion and neuroticism have been studied most. According to McCrae and Costa (1991), Agreeableness and Conscientiousness improve social and achievement experiences, which promotes subjective well-being. Openness to experience should produce positive and negative feelings. Openness to experience is unrelated.

The Big Five is sometimes criticized for covering too much ground. The Big Five provides a basic summary of personality, but it needs more particular traits to predict outcomes (John & Srivastava, 1999). The Big Five categorizes personality traits, not personality. Thus, it is more descriptive than explanatory and fails to account for individual differences (John & Srivastava, 1999). It cannot explain human behavior. The Big Five has been examined in numerous countries and verified by study (McCrae, 2002), however a few investigations have disproven it. Most Big Five research has focused on urban, literate groups. Gurven et al. (2013) were the first to test the Big Five model in

Bolivia's illiterate indigenous population. They found that participants did not organize the 44-item Big Five Inventory by Big Five characteristics. Each of the Big Five personality traits covers a vast variety of personality-related terms. Every quality combines several traits. For instance, extraversion includes subcategories like gregariousness (sociable), assertiveness (forceful), activity (energetic), excitement-seeking (adventurous), positive emotions (enthusiastic), and warmth (warm) (outgoing). While not thorough, the Big Five cover most personality concepts.

### 6.0 Impact of Big Five Personality Model on Organization Performance

The big five personality traits and entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) are individual-level drivers of entrepreneurial intention, according to studies. However, little is known about the personal traits of entrepreneurs. This study compares human traits that affect startup intent. The research found that several combinations of the major five personality traits and ESE can lead to entrepreneurial drive (Şahin, F., Karadağ, H. and Tuncer, B., 2019. ).

Conscientiousness improves employee performance, according to several research. Research shows a strong positive association. FMCG managers' job performance is positively correlated with conscientiousness. Analyzing neuroticism and employee performance is the second goal. Neuroticism is linked to management performance. Salespeople with low neuroticism are inappropriate. Experts have shown that extraversion always improves employee work effectiveness. Again, characteristic extraversion is positively correlated with employee performance. The fourth aim research found a statistically significant positive correlation between trait agreeability and work performance (Naeem, 2021). According to study, employee job performance is more correlated with awareness or extraversion than agreeableness. The FMCG industry's managers' openness to experience is positively correlated with their work performance. The job requires creativity and innovation (Gupta, N. and Gupta, A.K., 2020).

### 7.0 Conclusion

Despite all of its accomplishments, the five-factor model has received extensive criticism from a

variety of scholars. One issue is that there is no single hypothesis that can explain everything. Some scholars argue that the lexical hypothesis, although being appealing and logical, is too narrow to be termed a personality theory. In corporate contexts, the Big Five personality test paradigm is commonly considered as a viable tool. In addition to its dependability, much study has been undertaken on how employers may utilize it. According to the results of a poll, agreeableness and conscientiousness are the two most important characteristics for employees to possess in the workplace. The Big Five is one of the most popular personality models in current cross-cultural psychology, despite criticism.

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