

# Faking & Cheating and their Impact on Assessment Scores

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**SELECT**  
INTERNATIONAL

- **Background**
- **What Is Faking?**
- **Can People Fake?**
- **Do They Fake?**
- **Does It Matter?**
- **What to Do About it?**
- **Future Directions**

- **Increased Use of Personality & Non-Cognitive Testing Over Past 20 Years**
  - ✓ Useful validity
  - ✓ Essentially unrelated to cognitive ability
  - ✓ Adds incremental validity
  - ✓ Easy to administer
  - ✓ Self-report measures have less adverse impact
- **Self-report Measures Are Susceptible to Faking**
  - ✓ No “right” answer
  - ✓ Responses cannot be verified
  - ✓ Based on self-report
  - ✓ Concerns about faking date back to 1930’s

# What is Faking?

- **Faking Appears By Many Names**
  - ✓ Response distortion
  - ✓ Impression management
  - ✓ Social desirability
  - ✓ Unlikely virtues
  - ✓ Self-enhancement
  - ✓ Self-presentation

# What is Faking?

- **Socially Desirable Response Bias**
  - ✓ The tendency to give overly positive self-descriptions (Paulhus, 2002)
- **Two Common Measures of SD**
  - ✓ Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (MC-SDS) (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960)
  - ✓ Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR) (Paulhus & Jones, 1998)

# What is Faking?

- MC-SDS
  - ✓ Assumes that socially desirable response bias represents a single, latent construct
    - Example
      - “I never hesitate to go out of my way to help someone in trouble”
- BIDR
  - ✓ Breaks social desirability into 3 facets
    - Self-deceptive enhancement
      - e.g., “I am a completely rational person”
    - Self deception-denial
      - e.g., “Once I’ve made up my mind, other people can seldom change my opinion”
    - Impression management
      - e.g., “I never read sexy books or magazines”

# Can People Fake?

- Broad Consensus that Personality Tests Can be Faked
- “Can-Fake” Studies Compare “Honest” Responses to “Fake Good” Instructions
- Effect Sizes for Fake Good Instructions (Viswesvaran & Ones, 1999)

Big Five Dimension	Within	Between	Weighted Average
Emotional Stability	.93	.64	.76
Extraversion	.54	.63	.61
Openness to Experience	.76	.65	.68
Agreeableness	.47	.48	.48
Conscientiousness	.89	.60	.66
Weighted Average	.78	.60	.65

# Do They Fake?

- General Methodology Is to Compare Applicant vs. Incumbent Responses
- Applicants Tend to Score Higher on Personality Measures Than Incumbents
- Effect Sizes Usually Less Than What They Are In “Fake Good” Studies
- Applicants Aren’t Necessarily Good at Faking
  - ✓ Up to 20% fake in the “wrong” direction



# Does It Matter?

- Criterion-Related Validity
  - ✓ Fake good instructions seem to have impact on criterion-related validity
  - ✓ Validities in applicant vs. incumbent datasets very similar
  - ✓ By and large validity appears to be very resilient to faking (or at least to general social desirability)

# Does It Matter?

- Selection Decisions
  - ✓ While validity may not change much, who gets hired may be affected
  - ✓ Individuals with extreme impression management scores often over-represented among those hired
  - ✓ As selection ratio becomes more stringent, e.g., from 50% to 20%, the problem gets worse

# Does It Matter?

Rosse, Stechner, Miller & Levin (1998)

<b>Selection Ratio</b>	<b>% Hired with Extreme IM Scores (<math>z &gt; 3.0</math>)</b>
20% pass rate	44%
5% pass rate	88%

Bott, O'Connell, Ramakrishan & Doverspike (2007)

Comparing applicant to incumbent group pass rates

<b>Group</b>	<b>Pass Rate</b>
Incumbents (n=303)	22%
Applicants (n=5,629)	62%

# What To Do About It

- **Approaches to Dealing with Faking**
  - ✓ Instructions to candidates
  - ✓ Subtle items
  - ✓ Forced choice items
  - ✓ Detection scales

# What To Do About It

- **Instructions**

- ✓ We will catch you (detection)
- ✓ You will be punished (consequence)
- ✓ Positive outcome (reasoning)

Do not fake your test scores. This is a test of your honesty and integrity. The quality of your self-descriptions will greatly enhance your chances of being selected. Dishonest self-descriptions will dramatically lower your chances of being selected.

# What To Do About It

- **Instructions**

- ✓ Negative instructions (detection or consequence-based) have an effect on scores and lower scores in general
  - Some research suggests that honest people more affected by warnings
  - Real fakers not as affected and therefore differences between honest responders and fakers are increased
  - Perceived negatively by candidates
- ✓ Positive Instructions (Reasoning)
  - Seem to have modest impact on scores
  - Received more positively by candidates

# What To Do About It

- **Subtle Items**
  - ✓ Don't work very well
    - Lower validity
    - No less distortion bias
    - Confusing to candidates
    - Lower reliability

# What To Do About It

- **Forced Choice**
  - ✓ In general have less SD bias
  - ✓ Can reduce between group differences (Applicant vs. Incumbent) by ~50% (Christiansen, Burns & Montgomery, 2005)
  - ✓ May not have impact on validity or personnel decisions
  - ✓ Tend to have comparable validity to Likert items
  - ✓ Applicant reactions tend to be more negative to forced choice items
  - ✓ Tend to make tests longer



# What To Do About It

- **Detection Scales**

- ✓ Correcting for SD tends to have little or no effect on validity
- ✓ Sometimes can reduce validity (McCrae & Costa, 1983)
- ✓ SD scales have high false positive rates
- ✓ Social Desirability may better be considered as substantive personality trait vs. a statistical artifact

# What To Do About It

- **Griffith, Peterson, O'Connell & Isaacson (2008)**
  - ✓ Time 1 – Applicants to job given Conscientiousness (CON) and Social Desirability (SD) scales
  - ✓ Time 2 – Retested
    - Asked to respond honestly
    - Responses kept confidential
    - Not shared with company
    - Re-administered CON, SD and Counterproductive Work Behaviors (CWB) scale

# What To Do About It

- **Findings**

- ✓ Applicants higher than honest condition on CON scale ( $d=.26$ )
- ✓ 26% would have been “flagged” as taking
- ✓ SD scores not related to faking
- ✓ Correlation btwn CON & CWB not sig. in full sample ( $r=-.06$ )
- ✓ In the flagged group  $r=.30$ ,  $p<.01$
- ✓ Correlation between faking and CWB  $r=.26$ ,  $p<.01$
- ✓ High false positive for SD scale
  - Flagged 71-100% of faking although there were no significant differences in T1 & T2 CON scores
- ✓ 78% of people flagged by differences in T1 & T2 CON scores not flagged by SD

# What To Do About It

- **O'Connell, Kung & Tristan (2006)**
    - ✓ 3 different approaches to identifying faking
      - Social Desirability
      - Covariance Index (CVI)
      - Implausible Answers (IA)
  - **Administered to Applicants (n=2,028) and Incumbents (n=391)**
    - ✓ Applicants higher on:
      - Every personality scale (d=.65 to .91)
      - SD (d=.86)
      - CVI (d=.43)
- \*applicants didn't take IA

## Individuals Flagged as Fakers from Different Methods

	Incumbent	Applicant
SD	16%	43%
CVI	5%	15%
IA	8%	NA

## Correlation between Faking Indices & Hard Performance Measures

	<u>Tardiness</u>	<u>Accidents</u>	<u>Prod. Simulation</u>
SD	.07	-.04	-.16*
CVI	-.08	-.12	.03
IA	.23**	.12*	-.19*

## Low-moderate correlation among 3 measures of faking

	<b>CVI</b>	<b>IA</b>	<b>CVI (App)</b>
<b>SD</b>	.21**	.03	
<b>CVI</b>		-.06	
<b>SD (App)</b>			.52**

# Future Directions

- Need to better understand what really constitutes “faking”
- Impression management may not be that big of an issue
- Need better means of identifying faking and more importantly lying
- Better techniques for flagging and correcting for aberrant distortion
- Need to look at these phenomena in broader context, e.g., interviews, biodata, job performance



# Questions?

**Thank You!**