TEST ITEMS: INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES AND PERSONALITY (3RD ED.)

Chapter 1 (and Introduction)

1. Which of the following could be considered as an advantage of the idiographic approach to studying personality?

> 1. It allows efficient study of many personality characteristics in many people.
> 2. It provides a direct way to find and demonstrate general laws about personality.
> 3. It provides a way to generate new ideas about personality.

A. 1 only
B. 2 only
C. 3 only
D. 1 and 3 only
E. 2 and 3 only
pp. xv-xvii

2. Which of the following techniques would be included as part of the nomothetic approach to studying personality?

A. Measuring several personality characteristics in a large group of people
B. Studying the biography of a famous person
C. Analyzing the characters of a great novel
D. Conducting a one-on-one interview with a personality-disordered patient
E. Thinking introspectively and critically about all aspects of one's own personality
pp. xv-xvii

3. When researchers measure people's psychological characteristics, which of the following do they generally assume to be true?

A. Equal differences (intervals) between scores really do mean roughly equal differences in levels of the characteristic.
B. Equal ratios between scores really do mean roughly equal ratios in levels of the characteristic.
C. A score of zero really does mean a total absence of the characteristic.
D. When scores are ranked, equal differences between ranks really do mean roughly equal differences in levels of the characteristic.

E. All of the above.
pp. 2-3

4. Suppose that scores on an Anxiety scale are normally distributed and are calculated as standard scores (i.e., with a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one). In a typical group of 100 people, about how many would you expect to have standard scores *between* -1 and +1?

A. 16
B. 32
C. 50
D. 68
E. 95
pp. 3-5

5. Suppose that self-reports of "mathematics anxiety" correlate -.25 with performance on a mathematics test. What is the expected average score on the mathematics test for persons who are 2 standard deviations above the mean on mathematics anxiety?

A. 2.0 standard deviations below the mean
B. 1.0 standard deviations below the mean
C. 0.5 standard deviations below the mean
D. 0.25 standard deviations below the mean
E. 0.125 standard deviations below the mean
pp. 5-9

6. Suppose that, on average, persons who are 1 standard deviation above the mean on job satisfaction are 0.36 standard deviations above the mean on job performance. Which of the following would equal the correlation between job satisfaction and job performance? (Assume that the relation between job satisfaction and job performance is linear.)

A. .13
B. .60
C. .72
D. .18
E. .36
pp. 5-9

7. Which of the following correlations between two variables would tell you that those variables are essentially unrelated to each other?

A. .94
B. -.96

C. -.04
D. both A and B
E. both B and C
pp. 5-9

8. According to simulations by Schönbrodt and Perugini (2013), what is the approximate minimum sample size at which the correlation obtained in a random sample will likely be fairly close to the population correlation?

A. 10
B. 50
C. 250
D. 1250
E. 6250
p. 10

9. Which of the following tests should have the highest internal-consistency reliability?

A. Test A: 10 items, average inter-item correlation = .20
B. Test B: 5 items, average inter-item correlation = .10
C. Test C: 10 items, average inter-item correlation = .10
D. Test D: 5 items, average inter-item correlation = .20
E. Test E: 7 items, average inter-item correlation = .14
pp. 11-14

10. Which of the following ways of modifying a test would be most likely to *decrease* its internal-consistency reliability?

A. Removing the items that are only weakly correlated with the other items
B. Removing the items that are strongly correlated with most other items
C. Adding new items that are only weakly correlated with the current items
D. Adding new items that are strongly correlated with the current items
E. None of the above modifications would systematically influence internal-consistency reliability.
pp. 11-14

11. Suppose that you wanted to obtain ratings of many persons' levels of a personality trait by having one or more raters observe an interview with each person. To get a high level of inter-rater (inter-observer) reliability, which of the following would be the best strategy?

A. Obtain ratings of each person by one rater who is highly trained in observing interviews.

B. Obtain ratings of each person independently by two raters who are moderately trained in observing interviews.
C. Obtain ratings of each person independently by several raters who are not trained in observing interviews.
D. Obtain ratings of each person independently by several raters who are highly trained in observing interviews.
E. Obtain ratings of each person by one rater who is not trained in observing interviews.
pp. 15-16

12. Why is test-retest reliability usually measured over a short period of time (such as a few weeks) rather than over a long period of time (such as several years)?

A. Long-term changes in people's scores might reflect real developmental changes in the trait, not just short-term fluctuation.
B. Psychological tests have not yet been developed to show high reliability over such a long interval.
C. It is very difficult to obtain measurements from the same large group of people at two points of time several years apart.
D. If a characteristic shows high test-retest reliability over a period of a few weeks, then the same result will be virtually always be observed across a period of several years.
E. None of the above; test-retest reliability usually is in fact measured over very long time periods.
p. 17

13. Suppose that a scale had rather high reliability, but very low validity. Which of the following is most likely to be true of this scale?

A. It doesn't measure anything at all; it's almost entirely error.
B. It measures the right characteristic, but with much error of measurement.
C. It measures some characteristic with little error, but it is the wrong characteristic.
D. It could easily be improved by adding a few more items.
E. It could easily be improved by removing a few items.
p. 18

14. In questionnaires assessing people's interests, the respondent is asked to indicate how much he or she would enjoy various activities. Listed below are sets of three activities that might be included in a test of artistic interests. Which one of the following sets of three activities would have the best content validity for measuring artistic interests?

A. Reading classic novels, reading poetry, doing creative writing
B. Attending classical music concerts, learning to play an instrument, taking voice lessons
C. Visiting a sculpture exhibit, attending classical music concerts, watching sports on TV
D. Reading poetry, visiting a sculpture exhibit, going shopping

E. Attending classical music concerts, reading poetry, visiting a sculpture exhibit
p. 19

15. If we wanted to make a scale that had high internal-consistency reliability but still had good content validity, which of the following would we need to have?

      1. Items that are substantially correlated with each other.
      2. Items that together cover all aspects of the intended characteristic.
      3. Items that are all virtually uncorrelated with each other.
      4. Items that all focus on the same specific aspect of the intended characteristic.

A. 1 and 2
B. 1 and 3
C. 2 and 3
D. 2 and 4
E. 3 and 4
p. 19

16. Suppose that a self-report scale measuring Anxiety correlates -.60 with observer reports of Calmness. Which of the following statements best describes this scale?

A. It has poor convergent validity.
B. It has good convergent validity.
C. It has poor discriminant validity.
D. It has good discriminant validity.
E. None of the above; this correlation is relevant to reliability, not validity.
pp. 19-20

17. Suppose that you want to evaluate the discriminant validity of a self-report Laziness scale. Which of the following results for this scale would be evidence that it has good discriminant validity?

A. It correlates -.50 with observer reports of Hardworkingness.
B. It correlates -.50 with observer reports of Sociability.
C. It correlates .00 with observer reports of Hardworkingness.
D. It correlates .00 with observer reports of Sociability.
E. None of the above; these correlations are relevant to reliability, not validity.
pp. 19-20

18. The use of self-report methods of personality assessment depends on which of the following assumptions?

1. People understand the psychological causes of their typical behaviors, thoughts, and feelings.
2. People are able to describe their typical behaviors, thoughts, and feelings rather accurately.
3. People are willing to describe their typical behaviors, thoughts, and feelings rather accurately.

A. 1 only
B. 1 and 2 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 2 and 3 only
E. 1, 2, and 3
pp. 22-23

19. In comparison with self-**reports** that involve descriptions of typical behaviors, thoughts, and feelings, what advantage(s) might self-**ratings** of trait levels possess?

1. Don't require understanding of specific trait terms
2. More efficient measurement (i.e., require fewer items)
3. Are valid even if persons are unwilling to respond accurately

A. 1 only
B. 2 only
C. 3 only
D. 1 and 2 only
E. 1 and 3 only
p. 22-23

20. What is the best reason to expect that observer reports of personality could in some cases be more valid than self-reports would be?

A. Observers will see the person's behavior in only a limited range of settings, which makes it easier to provide accurate reports.
B. Observers are not necessarily aware of the person's thoughts and feelings, which makes it easier to provide accurate reports.
C. Observers might have a more objective perspective on the person's personality than he or she does, which makes it easier to provide accurate reports.
D. Observers can compare the person with other people, which makes it easier to provide accurate reports.
E. None of the above
pp. 23-24

21. Which of the following can be considered a major difficulty in the measurement of personality through direct observations of behavior (whether in natural or in artificial settings)?

A. It's very time-consuming and expensive to measure many traits reliably in many persons.
B. Observers of behavior show very poor agreement (i.e., low inter-observer reliability).
C. Behaviors provide little if any information about personality traits.
D. Both A and B above
E. Both A and C above
pp. 24-25

22. One method of personality measurement involves obtaining "biodata"—that is, records of various outcome variables (e.g., health information, criminal records, career information, etc.). Which of the following can be considered a complication of this method?

A. In general, life outcomes have nothing to do with personality
B. Any given life outcome might reflect several different personality traits
C. Any given life outcome might reflect many influences other than the individual's personality
D. Both A and B above
E. Both B and C above
pp. 25-26

Chapter 2

23. Which of the following statements is most nearly the same as saying that Zachary has a high level of the personality trait of fearfulness?

A. Like virtually everyone else, Zachary becomes afraid in situations of extreme danger.
B. At any given time, Zachary feels afraid of something.
C. In many situations, Zachary tends to become afraid more easily than others do.
D. Zachary has an unusually strong fear of spiders.
E. None of the above.
pp. 29-31

24. Recall that Mischel and Peake (1982) studied the trait of conscientiousness in university students by measuring such variables as assignment punctuality, note thoroughness, desk neatness, appointment attendance, and others. Jackson and Paunonen (1985) then re-analyzed those results. Which of the following statements is consistent with Jackson and Paunonen's findings?

A. The re-analysis was inconclusive due to problems with data coding.

B. You can't get an accurate idea of a person's conscientiousness no matter how many situations you observe his or her behavior in, because this trait doesn't really exist.
C. You can get an accurate idea of a person's conscientiousness by observing his or her behavior in any one relevant situation.
D. To get an accurate idea of a person's conscientiousness, you need to observe his or her behavior in any two relevant situations.
E. To get an accurate idea of a person's conscientiousness, you need to observe his or her behavior in many relevant situations.
p. 34

25. Recall that the question of whether or not traits exist can be considered in terms of "analysis of variance". In that context, which of the following statements is most accurate?

A. If traits exist, then there should be little or no variance due to situations.
B. If traits exist, then there should be little or no variance due to person-by-situation interactions.
C. If traits exist, then there should be little or no variance due to persons.
D. If traits exist, then there should be some considerable variance due to persons.
E. A and D.
pp. 35-36

26. What can be correctly concluded from the trait-versus-situation debate?

A. Traits and situations are actually the same thing.
B. Traits, if they exist at all, are unimportant in predicting behavior.
C. Traits determine behavior almost perfectly, regardless of the situation.
D. Traits usually predict behavior better in particular situations than in aggregated situations.
E. Traits predict behavior well when many situations are considered together.
pp. 32-36

27. In general, why do personality inventory scales typically each contain several different items?

  1. To assess the various different aspects of the trait to be measured.
  2. To get a good measurement of what is common to the items (i.e., the trait to be assessed).
  3. To catch people in an inconsistent pattern of responding.
  4. To distract respondents from the real purpose of the personality inventory.

A. 1 and 2
B. 1 and 3
C. 2 and 3
D. 2 and 4

E. 3 and 4
p. 37

28. If a personality inventory scale contained no "reverse-coded" or "negatively-keyed" items at all, what problem might that scale have?

A. Scores on the scale would partly reflect a tendency to agree with statements in general.
B. Scores on the scale would only be useful for measuring people with high levels of the trait.
C. Scores on the scale would have poor discriminant validity, because the items wouldn't measure anything that was unrelated to the trait.
D. Scores on the scale would be invalid, because people would be able to "fake" without getting caught.
E. None of the above; there would be no problem with such a scale.
pp. 38-39

29. Suppose that a researcher used an empirical test construction strategy to develop a scale measuring the trait of Nonconformity. The researcher had administered some personality inventory items to a small group of homeowners in a city, and then chose the items that were most strongly related to ratings (made by her assistants) of how unusual or unconventional was the appearance of each homeowner's house and yard. Which of the following might be a problem associated with the use of this method of test construction as described above?

A. These items might not be related to this indicator of Nonconformity in another group of homeowners.
B. These items might not be related to other indicators of Nonconformity (e.g., unusual style of clothing) in this same group of homeowners.
C. Both A and B
D. Neither A nor B
E. It depends completely on the time of year in which the ratings are made.
pp. 40-41

30. Recall that Jackson (1975) examined the validity of self-report personality scales in predicting observer reports for the same traits, with the aim of comparing scales that were constructed according to different methods. Jackson found that scales constructed according to the _____ method (even when constructed by students) were more valid than scales constructed according to the _____ method (even when constructed by psychologists).

A. rational; empirical
B. factor-analytic; rational
C. empirical; rational
D. empirical; factor-analytic
E. rational; factor-analytic
pp. 43-44

31. For a well-constructed, full-length personality inventory scale, what is a typical convergent validity correlation between self-reports and observer reports, where each observer knows his or her "target" person very well?

A. About .05 or .15
B. About .20 or .30
C. About .50 or .60
D. About .75 or .85
E. Above .90
p. 45

32. Recall that Funder, Kolar, and Blackman (1995) studied self- and observer reports of personality in students who had moved away from their home towns to attend college. Which of the following best summarizes the results of that study?

A. College students' self-reports were almost perfectly correlated with observer reports from their hometown friends.
B. College students' self-reports were almost perfectly correlated with observer reports from their college friends.
C. Observer reports of college students by their hometown friends were uncorrelated with observer reports of the same college students by their college friends.
D. Reports from the two kinds of observers were correlated, but the correlation was small enough to be attributed to the fact that both kinds of observer reports were correlated with self-reports.
E. Reports from the two kinds of observers were correlated, and this correlation was too large to be attributed to the fact that both kinds of observer reports were correlated with self-reports.
pp. 50-51

33. According to the results of investigations such as that by Funder, Blackman, and Kolar (1995), which of the following best explains the existence of some agreement between self- and observer reports of a target person's personality, and between different observers' reports of that person's personality?

A. People generally discuss their own personalities with the people they know.
B. People generally discuss the personalities of other people they know.
C. People generally have similar impressions about a given person's personality.
D. Both A and B
E. All of the above
pp. 50-51

34. Recall that Vazire (2010) examined the relative validity of self- and observer reports of personality. Which of the following statements is consistent with the results of her study?

A. For each of the traits, self-reports and observer reports were about equally valid.
B. For traits of anxiety and self-esteem, observer reports from friends were more valid than self-reports were.
C. For traits of talkativeness and dominance, observer reports from friends were more valid than self-reports were.
D. For traits of intelligence and creativity, observer reports from friends were more valid than self-reports were.
E. B, C, and D
pp. 52-53

35. Which of the following statements about social desirability scales is accurate?

1. These scales consist of items that describe a wide variety of socially desirable (or undesirable) tendencies.
2. These scales can accurately identify which persons are "faking" their responses on personality self-report items to appear more virtuous than they really are.
3. These scales can help in the development of personality trait scales that are not too heavily contaminated by socially desirable (or undesirable) responding.

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 1 and 3 only
C. 2 and 3 only