Abstract:

Personality and social psychology have historically been divided between personality researchers who study the impact of traits and social cognitive researchers who study errors in trait judgments. However, a broader view of personality incorporates not only individual differences in underlying traits but also individual differences in misperceptions by the self and by others. Such errors are likely to appear in the idiosyncratic personality judgments that raters make and are likely to have etiologies and causal force independent of trait perceptions shared across raters. Drawing on the logic of the Johari window (Luft & Ingham, 1955), the Self-Other Knowledge Asymmetry Model (Vazire, 2010), and Socioanalytic Theory (Hogan, 1996; Hogan & Blickle, 2013), we present a new model that uses confirmatory bifactor analysis to separate personality variance into consensus about underlying traits (Trait), unique self-perceptions (Identity), and impressions conveyed to others that are distinct from self-perceptions (Reputation). We provide three demonstrations of how this Trait-Reputation-Identity (TRI) Model can be used to understand (a) consensus and discrepancies across rating sources, (b) personality’s links with self-evaluation and self-presentation, and (c) gender differences in traits. We conclude by discussing how researchers can use the TRI Model to achieve a more sophisticated view of personality’s impact on life outcomes, developmental trajectories, genetic origins, person-situation interactions, and stereotyped judgments.