Integrating Technology and Personality Measures: SIFFM Administration via SKYPE

Personality traits are typically assessed using a self-report questionnaire. Although this has advantages, such as ease of administration, another potentially valuable alternative methodology is the use of a structured interview administered. One difficulty in using the interview method is the need for the subject to be physically present for the interview. In the present study we examined the reliability of interview methods using a web-based video calling platform (i.e., Skype). Nine trained interviewers administered the Structured Interview for the Five-Factor Model of Personality (SIFFM) to 26 research participants. Twenty-three of the 26 participants completed a second interview 2-weeks later that was randomly assigned to occur in-person or via Skype. In both sessions, participants also completed three self-report instruments: the Five-Factor Obsessive-Compulsive Index (FFOCI), the Five-Factor Model Rating Form (FFMRF), and the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS-X). Overall, the SIFFM domain scores displayed strong dependability across the 2-week interval, with a median correlation of .815. Further, we did not find a significant difference in these test-retest correlations across the Skype and in-person interview conditions, suggesting this method can be an effective tool. Finally, the SIFFM scores related well with other personality measures. Although, our conclusions were limited by the small sample size, these findings suggest that the SIFFM interview is a valid and reliable measure of personality that can be effectively implemented using web-based video calls.