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Supervisor Personality and Employee Well-Being

Chantelle Wells *

The present study attempted to bridge a gap in the literature that exists between harmful aspects of supervisor personality and employee well-being. A great deal of the pre-existing literature focuses on the Dark Triad of personality and clinical levels of psychopathy, and less on more normative, subclinical personality characteristics beyond those included in the Five Factor Model (FFM). The present study utilized the HEXACO model of personality to examine the relationship of interest through conceptualizing harmful supervisor personality characteristics as low scores on the Honesty-Humility dimension (also known as the H-factor), as perceived by employees. Employee well-being for the purposes of the present study was operationalized through scores obtained on the Mental Health Inventory (MHI; Veit & Ware, 1983a), which participants completed with regards to their own mental state. Correlational analyses revealed that Honesty-Humility was not related to mental health. Subsequent analyses did however reveal statistical differences between the Honesty-Humility and the Mental Health Inventory subscales once supervisor gender was accounted for.

Within the industrial organizational psychology literature, the Job-Demands Resources (JD-R) model has been used as a framework to understand and explain how job demands and resources interact to influence employee well-being (Demerouti et al., 2001). Job resources are characteristics of an employee's job that allow them to cope with job demands and leads to improved physical and psychological outcomes (Bakker et al., 2007). Conversely, job demands can be understood as characteristics of an employee's job that are particularly difficult and exceed their personal capabilities (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker et al., 2007). As a result, these job demands are associated with negative physical and psychological outcomes. One such job demand that is of particular interest for the purposes of the present study are harmful supervisor personality characteristics, and the implications thereof for the well-being of employees.

Through the JD-R model, supervisor personality and behavioural manifestations thereof can be understood and conceptualized as a potentially harmful job demand. Previous research suggests that abusive supervision can result in detrimental consequences for

organizations generally, and for individual employees specifically (Tepper, 2000). A great deal of this research has focused on the Dark Triad of personality (Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy) in organizational leaders and the well-being of employees. More specifically, in corporate settings it has been found that higher levels of psychopathy in leaders resulted in decreased levels of psychological well-being in subordinates (Mathieu, Neumann, Hare, & Babiak, 2014). Thus, the pre-existing literature suggests that harmful aspects of supervisor personality as conceptualized by psychopathy can have negative consequences for the psychological well-being of employees. However, to date there is limited research concerning the effects of more sub-clinical harmful personality characteristics in supervisors, and subsequent implications for employees working in more entry-level positions that are not necessarily corporate in nature (i.e. retail).

Another relatively new way to conceptualize and measure supervisor personality characteristics in organizations is through the use of the HEXACO model of

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personality (Honesty-Humility, Emotionality, eXtraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Openness to Experience). The HEXACO model, although new, has been shown to be more comprehensive than the FFM of personality (emotional stability, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness to experience; Ashton & Lee, 2008). The most notable addition to the pre-existing model is Honesty-Humility, which to date remains relatively understudied in comparison to the other traits (which are conceptually very similar to the FFM).

Therefore, the purpose of the present study is to bridge the gap between these two different, yet related areas of research. As illustrated by the JD-R model, job demands such as supervisor personality can negatively impact the well-being of employees. In addition, the H-factor of the HEXACO model represents a relatively new and understudied conceptualization of human personality. The present study will attempt to contribute to the growing body of literature on the utility of the HEXACO model through investigating perceived levels of Honesty-Humility in work supervisors and the implications thereof for the psychological well-being of employees.

Supervisor Personality

The importance of good leadership in organizations should not be minimized. Hogan and Hogan (2001) assert that effective leadership is essential to the success of an organization, whereas ineffective leadership can have detrimental consequences. Further, leadership failure can be attributed to problematic personality traits of the leader. Hogan & Kaiser (2005) have expanded on this, positing that personality determines leadership style, which in turn affects employees. Accordingly, they maintain that personality can be understood in one of two ways: how a person thinks about himself or herself, known as identity; or how others view that person, known as reputation (Hogan & Kaiser, 2005). The former is often difficult to observe and measure

due to the complexity of underlying thought processes, and as such, limited research exists concerning the effects of identity on leadership outcomes. However, the latter is more easily observable and measurable because evaluations are based on what the supervisor does, and not the more complex underlying reasons for why they chose to perform the actions that they did (Hogan & Hogan, 2001).

These findings, although perhaps counterintuitive, suggest that the effects of supervisor personality traits can be more accurately examined through the use of observer-reports rather than self-reports. Thus, it seems appropriate that research examining the effects of supervisor personality on employees should utilize observer-reports completed by people within the organization, rather than the supervisor themselves. As such, these ratings present a more accurate picture of the supervisor's observable behaviours, which can be used to draw inferences about key personality characteristics of interest.

Supervisor Personality and the Dark Triad. In recent years, the Dark Triad of personality has received an increased amount of attention in the literature, specifically as it pertains to leadership in corporate settings (Mathieu et al., 2014). The Dark Triad is comprised of three different, yet moderately intercorrelated subclinical traits including: Machiavellianism, the tendency to be manipulative and insincere; Narcissism, having feelings of superiority and entitlement; and Psychopathy, characterized by the exploitation of others and a lack of empathy (Lee & Ashton, 2005). Of the three, psychopathy has received the most attention in the literature as a negative facet of personality in corporate supervisors (Mathieu et al., 2014).

The most widely accepted measure for assessing psychopathy is the Psychopathy Checklist-Revised (PCL-R; Hare, 1991). However, the PCL-R was developed to be used in clinical settings and can only be administered by certain personnel with the appropriate

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qualifications. So while effective, this last stipulation makes it difficult to use in organizational research (Mathieu, Neumann, Babiak, & Hare, 2015).

In response to this problem, the Hare Self Report Psychopathy Scale (SRP-III) and the Business-Scan 360 (B-Scan 360) have been developed, both of which can be administered by organizational psychologists as well as human resources personnel (Mathieu, Neumann, Babiak, & Hare, 2015). Both the SRP-III and the B-Scan 360 have been shown to effectively measure subclinical levels of psychopathy, consistent with the underlying factor structure of the PCL-R in corporate settings (Mathieu, Neumann, Hare, & Babiak, 2014).

Another issue that arises when measuring psychopathic tendencies, is that individuals completing these questionnaires may attempt to guess what the researcher is trying to measure and adjust their answers accordingly. A related problem associated with this line of research is impression management. Impression management can be a confounding variable since employees may be reluctant to provide honest answers to questions that inquire about psychopathic personality characteristics if they are seen as having harmful consequences for one's employment status.

A final issue that arises when measuring psychopathic tendencies in organizational settings is that it is possible for employees to take offence to the items in the questionnaires.

As a possible solution to the aforementioned problems, the present study suggests that the H-factor might be of better use because the items contained in the measure are more subtle in nature. Although the issue of psychopathy in corporate supervisors has received a substantial amount of attention in the literature as of late, the same enthusiasm is lacking for the investigation of alternate, sub-clinical personality traits. Through conceptualizing harmful supervisor personality as low scores on the H-factor, some of the

problems listed above can perhaps be avoided. Research on the utility of the H-factor will be discussed next.

The HEXACO Model of Personality

Development of the HEXACO model.

Theoretically, in order to effectively study human personality in its entirety, a comprehensive list of all of the major dimensions of personality must be identified (Ashton & Lee, 2008). In practice however, the formulation of such a list is near impossible. The strategy that has been found to be the most helpful is the psycholexical approach to personality structure (Ashton et al., 2004). As discussed by Ashton and Lee (2008), the lexical hypothesis asserts that all personality characteristics are encoded in human languages. Further, any and all major dimensions of personality will manifest themselves in observable actions and humans will develop adjectives to describe these actions (Ashton & Lee, 2008). Upon compiling as many adjectives from as many languages as possible, a factor analysis is conducted to reveal a set of higher-order personality facets (Ashton & Lee, 2008).

In a hallmark study by Ashton and colleagues (2004), the results from eight independent psycholexical studies of personality structure were compiled from eight highly diverse languages (Dutch, French, German, Hungarian, Italian [Roman and Trieste], Korean and Polish), all of which had previously uncovered a similar six-factor structure. The six factors were labeled according to the lower-order personality factors that comprised them and are as followed: Honesty-Humility, characterized by trustworthiness and modesty; Emotionality, characterized by emotional reactivity; eXtraversion, sociability and liveliness; Agreeableness, gentleness and tolerance; Conscientiousness, orderliness and impulse control; and Openness to Experience, characterized by unconventionality (Ashton et al., 2004).

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The H-Factor. As previously mentioned, the addition of the H-Factor is the major difference between the HEXACO and FFM of personality, and has been found to contribute meaningfully to this pre-existing model (Ashton et al., 2004; Lee & Ashton, 2005; Ashton & Lee, 2007; Ashton & Lee, 2008; de Vries et al., 2009; Zettler & Hilbig, 2010). Although it exists as a factor within the larger HEXACO model, the H-Factor itself can be conceptualized as a broad personality dimension that includes four related, yet distinct traits including: fairness, the tendency to avoid committing acts of fraud; sincerity, the tendency to be genuine; greed avoidance, the tendency to be unconcerned with wealth; and modesty, the tendency to be unassuming (Lee & Ashton, 2005).

The H-Factor and the Dark Triad.

The Dark Triad traits, Narcissism, Machiavellianism and Psychopathy have been found to be distinct, yet moderately intercorrelated and reflect commonalities such as exploitation and manipulateness. Research on the Dark Triad and FFM of personality has revealed only modest correlations between the two constructs, which is considered to be a limitation of the FFM (Lee & Ashton, 2005). In a study conducted by Lee & Ashton (2005), undergraduate students completed self-report measures of the Dark Triad traits, the FFM of personality, and the HEXACO model of personality. The results revealed that all three of the Dark Triad traits correlated substantially and negatively with the H-Factor of the HEXACO model, whereas no factor within the FFM showed such a strong relationship (Lee & Ashton, 2005). Further research has revealed that low scores on the H-Factor are a reliable predictor of the Dark Triad traits (Lee & Ashton, 2014).

The H-Factor in Organizational Research. Due to the relatively new introduction of the H-factor, there is limited research concerning its utility in organizational research. However, the literature seems to suggest that this model can be useful. In one

study conducted by Lee, Ashton, and de Vries (2005), the self- and observer-reports of the HEXACO model were administered to student employees to examine their efficacy in predicting integrity-related variables. The results revealed that both reports significantly increased the predictability of the integrity-related variables over and above the FFM. Further, the authors note the unique importance of observer-reports in personality research; specifically how they can be used to access information about the target's personality that cannot be accessed through self-reports alone (Lee, Ashton, & de Vries, 2005).

The Present Study

The present study proposes a design that will contribute meaningfully to the pre-existing literature on the effects of negative supervisor personality traits, as well as the H-Factor of the HEXACO model. As mentioned, a great deal of the research on harmful aspects of supervisor personality has focused on psychopathy as it relates to supervisors in corporate settings. As such, the present research will investigate the more normative, subclinical trait of Honesty-Humility in non-corporate environments. Previous researchers have cited that a major obstacle to conducting this research is that access to corporate samples are very difficult to obtain, due to the fact that companies are reluctant to expose themselves to scrutiny (Mathieu, Neumann, Babiak, & Hare, 2015).

Another commonly cited obstacle concerns measuring psychopathy, which can be problematic because of the administrative stipulations of the PCL-R. In an attempt to resolve this problem, scales such as the SRP-III and B-Scan 360 have been developed and used by industrial organizational psychologists as well as human resources personnel, both of which have been shown to effectively measure sub-clinical levels of psychopathy (Mathieu, Neumann, Hare, & Babiak, 2014; Mathieu, Neumann, Babiak, & Hare, 2015). However, it is possible that employees will perceive the nature of the items contained in these

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questionnaires as offensive. Further, impression management tactics can prove to be a confounding variable, as employees might choose to alter their responses in what they think is a more desirable way, so as to not harm their employment status (Bourdage, Wiltshire, & Lee, 2015). As a final point, the items contained in these measures tend to be more overt, making it easier to respond in a socially desirable manner.

To expand on this research, and to resolve some of the existing problems associated with it, the present study proposes to contribute in a meaningful way to the literature by measuring supervisor personality with the other-rater version of the HEXACO questionnaire (HEXACO-PI-R; Ashton & Lee, 2004). The research suggests that the H-Factor is a reliable predictor of personality, and as such, it is possible that it can prove to be a useful indicator of harmful personality qualities in supervisors as evaluated by employees (Ashton & Lee, 2008). As a final point, the present study proposes to examine this phenomenon by recruiting employees working primarily in environments other than those of a corporate nature.

Mental Health. Employee well-being for the purposes of the present study will be operationalized through scores on the MHI (Veit and Ware, 1983a). The MHI consists of one higher-order factor known generally as mental health, as well as two second-order factors known as: psychological distress, which encompasses anxiety, depression, and loss of behavioural/emotional control; and psychological well-being, which encompasses general positive affect and emotional ties. Lastly, the MHI has five lower-order factors which include: anxiety, depression, loss of control, positive affect, and emotional ties.

It is important to note that employees will be completing the MHI (Veit & Ware, 1983a) with the goal of reporting their own mental state. Conversely, the other-rater version of the H-Factor utilized in the present study

requires employees to rate their supervisor's personality (as opposed to the supervisor themselves reporting on their own personality characteristics).

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1. Employees who rate their supervisors as being low on the higher-order Honesty-Humility dimension of the HEXACO model will demonstrate corresponding lower levels of 'mental health', as demonstrated by the higher-order factor of the Mental Health Inventory (MHI; Veit & Ware, 1983a). That is, it is predicted that employees who assign their supervisors low scores on Honesty-Humility will report high scores on mental illness (low scores of mental health).

Hypothesis 2. Employees who assign their supervisors low scores on the Honesty-Humility dimension will report higher levels of 'psychological distress', and conversely lower levels of 'psychological well-being' as measured by the MHI (Veit & Ware, 1983).

Hypothesis 3. Employees who assign their supervisors low scores on the four lower-order dimensions of the H-factor of the HEXACO model (sincerity, fairness, greed avoidance, modesty) will demonstrate lower levels of psychological well-being, as conceptualized by the five lower-order facets of the Mental Health Inventory (anxiety, depression, loss of control, positive affect, emotional ties; Veit & Ware, 1983).

Method

Participants

The final sample in the present study consisted of 131 undergraduate students from the University of Western Ontario. These participants included 96 females, 34 males, and one individual who chose not to disclose their gender. Participants ranged in age from 18-22 years ($M = 18.79$, $SD = 0.96$). Further, the participants worked from 2-35 hours per week

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($M = 12.67$, $SD = 7.28$), and had been working under their current supervisor for anywhere from 0-48 months ($M = 11.69$, $SD = 11.44$). Participants were also employed in one of the following settings: restaurant/food (42.0%), retail (21.4%), office (8.4%), or research (2.3%). In addition, 26% of participants indicated that they worked in an environment other than those listed, some of which included: residence don, lifeguard, tour guide, power skating teacher, child care, personal support worker, and camp counsellor, respectively.

There were two inclusion criteria for the present study. Participants were instructed before signing up that they had to be enrolled as a full-time student at the university, as well as be employed on either a part- or full-time basis. Because of this, the data collected from participants who indicated they were not currently employed was removed prior to data analysis. However all participants (including the ones without work experience) were compensated with course credit as a partial fulfillment for their psychology course. All individuals underwent the same testing procedures.

In total, 250 participants were recruited, the rationale for this being twofold. First, as noted by Kenny (1987), assuming the true correlation between supervisors' personality and employee well-being is approximately $r = .30$, then with a sample size of $N = 100$, we would anticipate the power of our study to be .86. Power analyses are used to calculate the minimum sample size needed so that the effect can be detected. Furthermore, by increasing our sample size to $N = 200$, the power estimate increases to .99.

Second, the authors of the HEXACO-PI-R (Ashton & Lee, 2004) recommend using approximately 250 participants (Ashton & Lee, 2016b). Since we anticipated there would be participants who signed up for the study despite not being presently employed, we sought to collect data from more than 200 participants in hopes that after we removed these individuals

from subsequent analyses, we would be left with a usable sample of $N = 200$. The initial sample of the present study was $N = 219$. However, after removing the data from those participants who did not meet the inclusionary criteria, the sample was reduced to $N = 131$ with a corresponding power of .969.

Materials

Demographic Questionnaire. This questionnaire included general items concerning age and gender, as well as more specific items pertaining to the workplace such as: the number of hours worked per week, work environment, and the participant's duration of employment under their current supervisor (see Appendix A).

HEXACO-PI-R (Ashton & Lee, 2004). The 100-item other-rater questionnaire measures the six higher-order personality factors of the HEXACO model. These higher-order factors and example items for each are as follows: Honesty-Humility ("He/she wouldn't pretend to like someone just to get that person to do favours for him/her"), Emotionality ("He/she would feel afraid if he/she had to travel in bad weather conditions"), eXtraversion ("He/she feels reasonably satisfied with himself/herself overall"), Agreeableness ("He/she rarely holds a grudge, even against people who have badly wronged him/her"), Conscientiousness ("He/she cleans his/her office or home quite frequently"), and Openness to experience ("He/she is interested in learning about the history and politics of other countries"). All six higher-order factors have 16 items, each with four facets and four items per facet. The Cronbach's alpha for each of the higher order factors range from .85 to .89, suggesting that these factors have high internal reliability (Ashton & Lee, 2016a).

All of the items are listed as statements and were rated using a five-point Likert scale. Participants were instructed to provide answers to the statements based on their supervisor's personality. Possible responses range from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

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As previously mentioned, each higher-order personality factor has four facets. However, the primary hypothesis of the present study only concerns the facets of the H-factor, which will be discussed here. The four facets of the H-factor and example items include: sincerity (“He/she wouldn't use flattery to get a raise or promotion at work, even if he/she thought it would succeed”), fairness (“He/she would never accept a bribe, even if it were very large”), greed avoidance (“Having a lot of money is not especially important to him/her”), and modesty (“He/she thinks that he/she is an ordinary person who is no better than others”). The Cronbach's alpha for the four lower-order facets range from .69 to .85, suggesting all four have relatively good internal reliability (Ashton & Lee, 2016a).

Mental Health Inventory (MHI; Veit & Ware, 1983a). The literature suggests that a single mental health factor underlies the entire scale, and is often referred to as ‘mental health’ (Veit & Ware, 1983b). Further, there is evidence for two higher-order factors: psychological distress, which encompasses anxiety, depression, and loss of behavioural/emotional control; and psychological well-being, which encompasses general positive affect and emotional ties. The 38 items on the MHI measure current symptoms of five lower-order facets, including: sub-clinical anxiety (“I consider myself to be a very nervous person”), sub-clinical depression (“I consider myself to be moody and brood about things”), loss of behavioural/emotional control (“Nothing turns out as wanted”), general positive affect (“I am a happy person”), and emotional ties (“I feel loved and wanted”).

Previous research has found good internal reliability for the facets of the MHI. The Cronbach's alpha for general mental health is .96, and the reliability scores for psychological distress and well-being are .94 and .92, respectively. Lastly, the Cronbach's alpha for the five lower-order factors were found to range from .81 to .90 (Veit & Ware, 1983b).

All 38 items are listed as statements, and participants are asked to report on the frequency with which they experience the symptom listed in the statement, as measured by a six-point Likert scale. Possible responses range from 1 (none of the time) to 6 (all of the time).

Procedure

Participants were first presented with the Letter of Information and Consent. At the end of the letter, participants were informed that completing the subsequent questionnaires would be taken as an indication of their consent to participate. Once consent was obtained, participants were presented with The Demographic Questionnaire (see Appendix A). After, participants were presented with the HEXACO-PI-R (Ashton & Lee, 2004), followed by the MHI (Veit & Ware, 1983a).

In addition to the 100 items on the HEXACO-PI-R (Ashton & Lee, 2004) and the 38 items on the MHI (Veit & Ware, 1983a), one extra item was inserted into each of the questionnaires to test for careless responding. Participants who did not choose the instructed response were assumed to be inattentive and their responses were removed from subsequent analyses. An example of such a question was “for quality control purposes, please answer ‘1’ to this question.”

After the completion of the MHI (Veit & Ware, 1983a), participants were presented with the debriefing form and compensated for their participation. Note: participants who did not complete the study in its entirety were nonetheless fully compensated for their participation.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics and reliability coefficients for both the higher-order and lower-order facets are reported in Table 1. All of the subscales reached acceptable levels of internal

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consistency with the exception of: sincerity, modesty, and emotional ties. As a result, subsequent analyses using these subscales should be interpreted with caution. However, it should be noted that the reliability coefficient for sincerity in Ashton and Lee's (2016a) initial study was just below the accepted cutoff of .70.

Zero-order correlations

To test the main hypothesis of the present study, a Pearson product moment correlation was computed between the higher-order Honesty-Humility and mental health facets. Contrary to what was expected, it was found that the correlation between the H-factor and mental health was not significant (Table 2).

Further analyses revealed that inconsistent with the second hypothesis, Honesty-Humility was not related to psychological well-being or psychological distress, the second-order facets of the MHI. Finally, results revealed that the four lower-order facets of Honesty-Humility did not correlate with the five lower-order facets of the MHI, which was inconsistent with the third hypothesis (Table 2).

Exploratory Analyses

Supervisor Gender. As a follow-up analysis, all of the correlations were computed separately for those participants who reported having male supervisors and female supervisors, as seen in Table 3. Despite this, the results revealed that the correlations between the higher-order Honesty-Humility and mental health facets were not significant. However, five of the Honesty-Humility and mental health subscales revealed statistically significant correlations, as depicted in Table 3. Fischer's Z test was used to determine if these observed differences between male and female supervisors were statistically significant.

Fischer's Z test revealed three significant differences between these correlations. First, the relationship between

modesty and emotional control was found to be significant and positive for those participants with male supervisors, $Z = 2.38, p < .05$. Second, the relationship between sincerity and anxiety was found to be significant and negative for participants with female supervisors, $Z = -2.05, p < .05$. Third, the relationship between modesty and anxiety was found to be significant and negative for participants with female supervisors, $Z = -2.64, p < .01$. It is important to note that for all three of the aforementioned findings, the results are correlational in nature meaning causality cannot be inferred.

Supervisor Tenure. As part of the follow-up exploratory analyses, the moderating effect of supervisor tenure on the relationship between perceived Honesty-Humility in supervisors and employee mental health was performed. The expectation being that the relation between these two variables would be stronger the longer an employee had worked with their supervisor. These analyses were conducted using Hayes Process Macro in SPSS Version 21 (Hayes, 2012). Honesty-Humility and supervisor tenure variables were centred, and the analysis was performed using bootstrapping ($N = 10,000$ samples). Supervisor tenure did not moderate the relation between ratings of Honesty-Humility in supervisors and employee mental health, unstandardized $b = .001, t(127) = 0.08, ns$.

Discussion

Correlational analyses revealed that inconsistent with the main hypothesis of the present study, scores on the Honesty-Humility dimension were unrelated to those on the MHI. That is to say that participants who perceived their employers to be low on the Honesty-Humility dimension of the HEXACO model of personality did not report lower levels of mental health, generally. Further, the analyses performed to investigate the relationships between scores on the second- and lower-order facets of the H-factor and the MHI did not reach acceptable levels of significance.

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These findings were unexpected because as previously mentioned, there is a significant body of literature supporting the relationship between harmful supervisor personality traits and consequences for the psychological well-being of employees. Further, there is strong evidence suggesting the Dark Triad of personality and psychopathic traits in corporate supervisors can have detrimental consequences for organizations generally and individual employees, specifically.

In terms of more normative, sub-clinical traits, both the FFM as well as the HEXACO model of personality have shown to be correlated with the Dark Triad, the latter more so because of the introduction of the H-factor (Lee & Ashton, 2005). In addition, the limited research concerning the utility of the H-Factor in workplace settings seems to be promising thus far (Lee, Ashton, & de Vries, 2005).

As such, the following research provides additional support for the use of other-reports to examine supervisor personality as well as a possible explanation for the non-significant findings. In a study conducted by Bourdage, Wiltshire, and Lee (2015), the underlying role of personality in the use of impression management (IM) tactics was investigated. It was found that employees who were low in Honesty-Humility were more likely to use such tactics in addition to there being a significant amount of overlap between the two constructs. Another interesting discovery was that co-workers were able to accurately rate one another on a number of personality characteristics, with the exception of detecting low Honesty-Humility (a pattern that is similar for the detection of IM tactics). The authors posit that individuals low in Honesty-Humility might be more inclined to use IM to get ahead in their respective careers (Bourdage, Wiltshire, & Lee, 2015). Similar findings in non-work-related settings have also been reported (de Vries, Zettler, & Hilbig, 2014).

These findings have implications for the results of the present study. As suggested by

Bourdage, Wiltshire, and Lee (2015), it is possible that supervisors who are low on Honesty-Humility might be better at managing other's impressions of them. It is also possible that these individuals may engage in behaviours that compromise the mental health of their employees, but the employees might not see these behaviours as particularly worrisome or overtly harmful.

Exploratory Analyses

Supervisor Gender. Subsequent exploratory analyses revealed several interesting correlations once supervisor gender was used to partial the data from those participants who reported having female supervisors and male supervisors. As previously mentioned, the relationship between modesty and emotional control for participants with male supervisors was significant and positive; suggesting that participants who perceived their male supervisor to be low in modesty also reported low levels of emotional control. In addition, the relationship between sincerity and anxiety for participants with female supervisors was significant and negative; implying that participants who perceived their female supervisor to be low in sincerity reported higher levels of anxiety. Lastly, the relationship between modesty and anxiety for participants with female supervisors was significant and negative; suggesting that participants who perceived their supervisor to be low on modesty also reported higher levels of anxiety. Again, it should be noted that these results are correlational in nature, meaning that the relationship can be in the direction described, or the reverse.

To date, there is no research that has examined gender differences in terms of the HEXACO traits and implications for the workplace. However, there are several accounts of gendered differences in the workplace more generally speaking. In one such study, Gonzalez-Mulé, DeGeest, Kiersch, and Mount (2013) examined differences in personality traits and how these predicted counterproductive work behaviours directed at individuals (CWB-

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I). Participants consisted of students who reported working at least 15 hours per week and completed measures of: the FFM, calmness, pleasantness, and CWB-I. Results revealed that males who were low on agreeableness and pleasantness reported higher levels of CWB-I, a relationship that was non-significant for females. Further, females who reported being low in emotional stability reported significantly higher levels of CWB-I, a relationship that was not significant for males. These results suggest that personality traits predict CWB-I differently for males and females. As well, it is noted that this study is one of the first to examine how different personality traits beyond those included in the FFM predict aggression in the workplace differently for males and females. The authors conclude by suggesting that future research should continue to examine other traits beyond the Big Five, as well as use measures other than self-reports (Gonzalez-Mulé, DeGeest, Kiersch, & Mount, 2013).

These findings seem to suggest that when conducting research on personality in the workplace it is useful to consider gender as a potential moderator. The results obtained in the present study also suggest that this is an important consideration, as the results revealed differences in the relationship of interest once supervisor gender was controlled for. As such, future studies examining the effects of harmful personality traits in the workplace should look at the moderating effect of gender, as it is possible that personality traits and the consequences thereof differ once this is accounted for.

Supervisor Tenure. The analysis performed to see if the number of months that employees worked under their supervisor moderated the relationship between Honesty-Humility and employee mental health was not significant. That is to say that the correlation between the two higher order facets did not depend on the number of years participants had worked under their respective supervisors.

This is a surprising finding and is not consistent with previous research on the subject. In one such study, de Vries, Lee, and Ashton (2008) examined the levels of self-other agreement between measures of Honesty-Humility and psychopathy. Results revealed that self-other agreement was high when both parties had been acquainted for a longer period of time, whereas self-other agreement was essentially zero when the parties did not know one another very well (De Vries, Lee, & Ashton, 2008). These results imply that when dyads are able to interact for a longer period of time, an individual's perception of a target's personality begins to approximate what the target person thinks of their own personality.

Limitations

Although there were a number of interesting results revealed in the present study, there are also a number of limitations that will be addressed here. First, the reliability scores for modesty, sincerity, and emotional control failed to reach acceptable levels of significance, meaning that the results should be interpreted with caution. However, it is important to note that these values were similar to those reported in earlier research, and the failure to reach significance can likely be attributed to the smaller sample size of the present study (Ashton & Lee, 2016a; Veit & Ware, 1983b).

As a related point, the final sample size for the present study was significantly reduced once the data from those participants who did not meet the inclusionary criteria were removed. The authors of the HEXACO-PI-R (Ashton & Lee, 2004) suggest using 250 participants (Ashton & Lee, 2016b), which is why data from N = 219 participants was collected in the present study. However, more participants than expected failed to meet the inclusionary criteria, yet completed the study nonetheless which reduced the sample size to N = 131.

In addition, the present sample size consisted solely of students. It is possible that this could have dampened the relationship

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between the two constructs of interest; for being a student carries unique stressors that are different from those experienced when working full-time hours without the demands of school. In the study conducted by Gonzalez-Mule, DeGeest, Kiersch, and Mount (2013) a student sample was also used, however, it was a requirement that the students work a minimum of 15 hours per week. In the present study, the data from participants was included even if they were working as little as one hour per week. Thus, if using student samples in the future, it would be useful to require that participants work more frequently than did those in the present study. Alternatively, a non-student sample could be used altogether.

As well, the present study utilized an other-rater measure to assess Honesty-Humility based upon the rationale provided by Hogan and Hogan (2001). However, there is evidence to suggest that both self- and other- measures are useful in such research (Gonzalez-Mule, DeGeest, Kiersch, & Mount, 2013).

Finally, the results in the present study were correlational in nature, meaning that causality cannot be inferred. So although the significant correlations mentioned should not be ignored, it is possible that the actual direction of the relationships are in the opposite direction.

Directions for Future Research

It is the opinion of the current author that although the relationships of interest were not significant, that future researchers should nonetheless attempt to replicate the study design. It is also suggested that such research be conducted with a larger sample size than was used in the final analyses of the present study. Previous research provides strong evidence for the utility of the H-Factor, and it is quite possible that future researchers will find significant effects if the sample size approximates $N = 250$, as suggested by Ashton and Lee (2016b).

Furthermore, future researchers could utilize working samples that do not consist of solely of students, as well as compare data from both full- and part-time employees. Although previous research has utilized similar samples in the past, it has been cited as a limitation and suggested that organizational research as it pertains to the H-Factor be conducted in a variety of working populations (Lee, Ashton & de Vries, 2005).

A final direction for future researchers is that a number of different measures be used to examine the relationship between Honesty-Humility and mental health. Gonzalez-Mule, DeGeest, Kiersch, and Mount (2013) utilized self-report measures in their research, whereas the present study utilized an other-rater measure. In a meta-analysis comparing the utility of self- and observer reports to measure CWB, Berry, Carpenter, and Barratt (2012) found that self-raters reported participating in more CWB than the results from other-raters suggested. However, for the purposes of the present study Hogan & Hogan (2001) suggest that other-reports are of better use. In saying this, future researchers should consider utilizing a combination of self- and other-reports when studying Honesty-Humility in the workplace.

Conclusion

The HEXACO model of personality and the H-Factor both provide a new and exciting area of research that has yet to be fully explored. Although the main hypotheses of the present study were not significant, this does not mean that both constructs are not worthy of the substantial amount of attention they have received in the literature as of late. Future researchers should continue to compare and contrast the FFM and HEXACO models of personality in organizational settings. Moreover, it is of the opinion of the current author that the effects of low Honesty-Humility in supervisors and others in organizational settings should be studied further as they relate to organizational and individual outcomes, with specific attention

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directed towards uncovering how supervisor gender affects this relationship.

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Table 1

Descriptive Statistics and Cronbach's reliability for HEXACO-PI-R and MHI subscales

	M	SD	Cronbach's α
Honesty-Humility	3.12	.51	.79
Sincerity	2.99	.72	.63
Fairness	3.50	.80	.75
Greed avoidance	2.83	.78	.71
Modesty	3.15	.69	.63
Mental health	4.53	.61	.94
Psychological well-being	4.33	.68	.89
Psychological distress	2.35	.66	.92
Anxiety	2.66	.77	.86
Depression	2.39	.73	.74
Emotional control	1.99	.70	.84
Positive affect	4.28	.72	.89
Emotional ties	4.54	.84	.66

Note. Reliabilities .7 or greater are in boldface.

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Table 2

Pearson product moment correlations between HEXACO and MHI subscales

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Honesty-Humility	1	.08	.03	-.10	.57**	.72**	.69**	.71**	-.09	-.09	-.09	.02	.05
2. Mental health		1	.84**	.94**	.10	.05	.08	-.01	-.84**	-.84**	-.86**	.80**	.70**
3. Psychological well-being			1	-.63**	.05	.06	.02	-.05	-.50**	-.61**	-.61**	.97**	.76**
4. Psychological distress				1	-.11	-.04	-.10	-.01	.92**	.85**	.88**	-.58**	-.56**
5. Sincerity					1	.16	.18*	.25**	-.08	-.14	-.11	.02	.12
6. Fairness						1	.347*	.41**	.004	-.03	-.09	.06	.06
7. Greed avoidance							1	.32**	-.11	-.08	-.08	.01	.04
8. Modesty								1	-.07	-.005	.04	-.03	-.08
9. Anxiety									1	.73**	.68**	-.47**	-.42**
10. Depression										1	.68**	-.57**	-.54**
11. Emotional control											1	-.56**	-.58**
12. Positive affect												1	.60**
13. Emotional ties													1

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

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Table 3

Pearson product moment correlations by supervisor gender

Supervisor gender	H-Factor		Sincerity		Fairness		Greed-Avoidance		Modesty	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Mental health										
Psychological WB	-.03	.04	.18	.01	-.11	.10	.13	-.02	-.25	.01
Psychological Distress	-.01	-.13	-.29	-.04	.15	-.10	-.16	-.08	.21	-.13
Anxiety	.05	-.24*	.08	-.27*	.02	-.03	-.12	-.11	.16	-.29*
Depression	-.09	-.11	-.15	-.14	-.05	-.01	-.13	-.02	.13	-.15
Emotional Control	.03	-.23	.01	-.26*	-.07	-.14	-.05	-.11	.25*	-.16
Positive Affect	.08	-.02	.16	-.13	.06	.06	.09	-.07	-.13	.05
Emotional Ties	.06	.01	.18	.04	-.01	.11	.13	-.08	-.16	-.03

* $p < .05$

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Appendix A

Demographic Questions

What is your age? _____

Please indicate the gender you most closely identify with (select one)?

Male Female Prefer not to answer

In a typical week, how many hours do you work at your current job? _____

Which of the following best describes your current work environment (select one)?

- A. Office job
- B. Retail
- C. Restaurant/Food Industry
- D. Research-Based
- E. Other, please specify _____

How long have you been working under your current supervisor (in months)? _____

Please enter your SONA ID number: _____

**note: your SONA ID number is needed so that we may grant you credit for your participation.*