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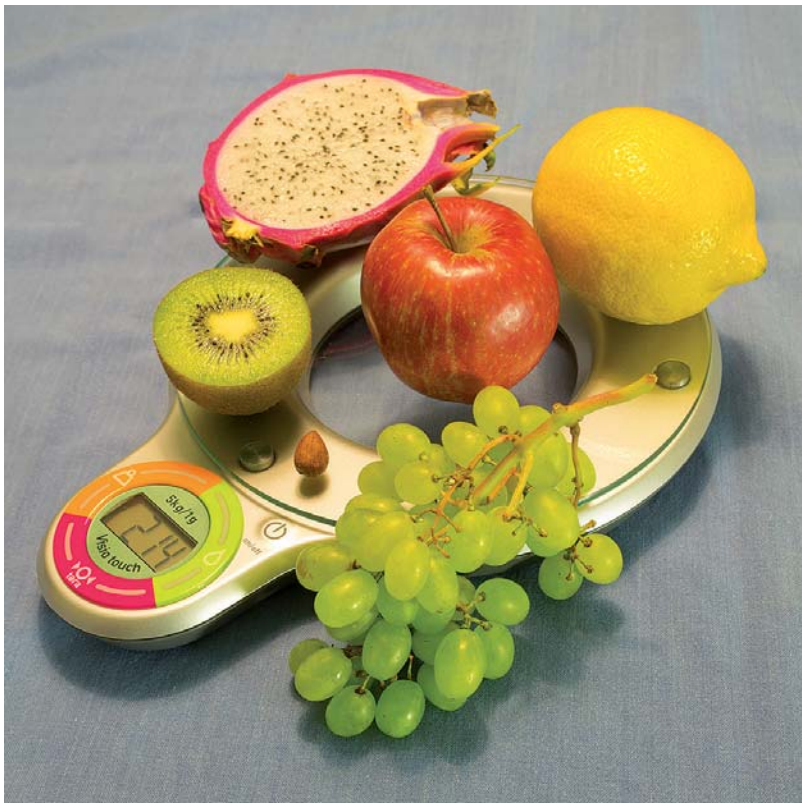
455

Laura Honkaniemi

Applicants in a Real-Life Selection Context

Their Personality Types, Reactions to the Process, and Faking



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ABSTRACT

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Yhteenveto: Hakijoiden persoonallisuustyypit, heidän reaktionsa arviointiprosessiin sekä vastausten kaunistelu henkilöarviointitilanteessa.

Socially desirable responding, or faking, is common in personnel assessment. This study examined whether applicants fake their egoistic competency, moralistic goodness, or both when self-assessing their personality in a real-life selection context (Study I). Moreover, the study investigated how the applicants' tendency to fake is linked to their reactions to the selection process (Study II). Additionally, this study examined the extent to which applicants' personality type is related to their reactions to the selection process (Study III).

The respondents were real-life applicants (n=466) to a vocational school for rescue workers. Each respondent was applying to one of three alternative career streams: fireman, emergency services dispatcher, or fire and rescue manager. Their personality was measured with the Personality Research Form PRF (Jackson, 1999), faking with the Balanced Inventory of Desired Responding BIDR (Paulhus, 1991) and reactions to selection process with an applicant reactions scale by Chan et al. (1998). Half of the respondents were warned against faking.

The main results showed, first, that applicants faked in both the moralistic and egoistic areas when self-assessing their personality. Second, the fairer applicants felt the selection process was the higher was their intentional faking. Third, the applicants' personality type was associated with their reactions to the selection process. More precisely, the respondents with an Overcontrolled personality type (characterized by low extraversion and agreeableness and high neuroticism) had less favourable perceptions about the fairness of the selection process than the respondents with a Resilient (characterized by high conscientiousness, below average neuroticism and above average extraversion and agreeableness) or Bohemian (characterized by low conscientiousness and below average extraversion) personality type. The respondents with an Undercontrolled personality type (characterized by very high neuroticism and extraversion and very low conscientiousness) gave average ratings of the fairness of selection process.

These findings suggest that applicants do not present themselves only as competent workers, but also as nice persons. Applicants do not fake evenly across the inventory, but only on some scales. The findings also suggest that intentional faking is linked to favourable perceptions about the selection process. Finally, the results suggest that personality type should be controlled for when studying the impact of external variables on applicant reactions, as personality is connected with reactions.

Keywords: faking, applicant reactions, personality type, person-centred approach

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In Töölö and Hitå, autumn 2012
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1 INTRODUCTION

Personnel selection is a process by which candidates for an open job position or training are found and assessed, and the best candidate is selected (Cook, 2009). A part of the selection process concerns the assessment of the applicants' aptitude for the position in question. This refers to acquiring relevant information about the candidates in order to predict their work performance (Honkanen & Nyman, 2001), their ability to do the job (Cook, 2009).

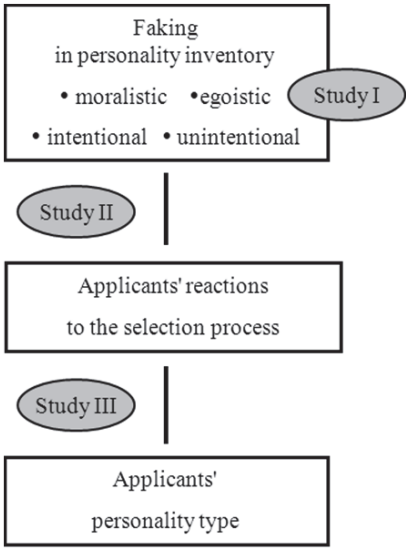
Applicants' tendency to prettify the impression they give about themselves, faking, presents challenges for the assessment process (Rosse, Stecher, Miller & Levin, 1998). For example, applicants may try to manage the impression about themselves selectively: they may focus on highlighting their exceptional competency as a worker or present themselves as a particuarly fine or honorable person (Paulhus, 1991). For the assessor responsible for the selection it is important to know what personality attributes applicants typically try to prettify. This helps the assessor to base the assessment on as valid information as possible.

Consequently, to plan and implement valid selection processes, it is important to find ways to reduce faking in selection contexts. One area worth exploring is applicants' reactions to the selection process itself. Applicants' favourable views on the selection process have been found to produce positive outcomes, such as positive views about the selecting organization (Hausknecht, Day & Thomas, 2004) and willingness to accept the job (Ployhart & Ryan, 1997). Moreover, a study conducted on proxy applicants (i.e. students who had to imagine they were applying for a job), the participants who felt that the process was fair, reported doing less faking during the selection process (McFarland, 2003). However, it is unclear whether positive reactions to the selection process actually lead to decreased levels of faking in a real-life selection context. Selectors can actively improve applicants' views about the selection process by, for instance, using selection methods that appear to be relevant and appropriate in this context (Gilliland, 1993). Therefore the possible power of favourable applicant reactions to decrease faking would have practical value in selection situations.

Applicants' reactions to the selection process are usually seen as a result of external factors, such as the methods used or interpersonal treatment (e.g. Arvey & Sackett, 1993; Gilliland, 1993). However, to fully understand applicants' reactions, it would also be important to identify the possible role of personality in them. For instance, to be able to study how external circumstances affect applicants' reactions, we need to know what role the applicants' personalities play in these relations. The impact of personality on applicant reactions has been studied earlier (Hausknecht et al., 2004; McFarland, 2003; Truxillo et al., 2006; Viswesvaran & Ones, 2004); however, these studies have been conducted on independent personality variables only, and the findings are inconsistent. A person-centred approach presents an alternative way to study the role of personality in applicant reactions (Laursen & Hoff, 2006). The person-centred approach treats personality as a combination of traits, a personality type, instead of studying the relations between independent personality variables and outcomes (Laursen & Hoff, 2006; Magnusson, 1999).

This research aimed to fill three needs: first, to find out what kinds of topics applicants fake in the assessment; second, to explore if applicant reactions to the selection process are related to faking; and third, to investigate if applicant reactions are linked to applicants' personality type (see Figure 1). To respond to these needs, this research utilized data collected in real-life selection process - more precisely in the psychological assessment phase - for entry to a vocational school education programmes.

FIGURE 1 The relations between the separate studies in this research .



1.1 Personnel assessment

Personnel assessment can be used, for example, in filling job vacancies, admissions to an educational facility, internal transfers in an organization and career counselling (Bennett, 1997; Kuuskorpi, 2012; Niitamo, 2003). Personnel assessment is more than the mere testing of the candidates; it consists of taking a variety of test scores from multiple methods and data from observed behavior to answer specific questions (Meyer et al., 2001), such as whether the applicant has a suitable personality for the particular job (Cook, 2009). A successful assessment requires, among other things, understanding of personality, knowledge of psychological measurement and methods, and their limitations, the capacity to conceptualize real-world conditions, the ability to challenge one's judgement, and interpersonal skills and sensitivity (Meyer et al., 2001). A personnel assessment can be conducted by expert professionals as a consultancy assignment, usually leaving only the final decision for the recruiting manager. Typically a report is written of the assessment: it summarizes the results and makes a prognosis about the candidate's future work behaviour and success (Cook, 2009; Honkanen & Nyman, 2001). Personnel assessment covers several areas. In addition to assessment of professional skills and competencies, for example mental ability, personality, motivation, social skills and style, the interests and values of the candidate can be assessed (Cook, 2009). Assessment of personality is relevant in selection because personality is related to, for instance, employee's job performance (Barrick et al., 2001) and job satisfaction (Judge, Heller & Mount, 2002).

1.1.1 Personality and personnel assessment

"Personality is an individual's unique variation on the general evolutionary design for human nature, expressed as a developing pattern of dispositional traits, characteristic adaptations, and integrative life stories complexly and differentially situated in culture" (McAdams & Pals, 2006, p.204). McAdams and Pals (2006) have created a framework that integrates various theories and trends about personality from different theorists into one construct of personality. The framework suggests three levels of personality, the first of which was the focus in this research:

- Dispositional traits: broad, non-conditional, de-contextualized dimensions such as extraversion, depressiveness, dutifulness etc. Traits are fairly stable in time, substantially heritable and they predict observed behavior. The surrounding culture and environment have only a little affect on these fundamental constructs, mostly on the expression of these traits.
- Characteristic adaptations: motivational, social-cognitive and developmental adaptations such as motives, goals, values, self-image,

etc. These are more affected by time, place, social roles, environment, culture, etc.

- Integrative life narratives: life stories that individuals construct to make meaning and establish identity. The narratives give the individual uniqueness to each person. These are very much affected by environment and culture.

Several constructs and models of dispositional traits (i.e. the first level) exist, but the most established model is called the Big Five or Five Factor Model (FFM) (Costa & McCrae, 1992; McCrae & Costa, 1997; McCrae & John, 1992). The Big Five consists of five basic personality dimensions: neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness (McCrae & John, 1992; McCrae et al., 2000). These can be further divided into sub-scales. The Big Five structure seems to be very stable across time: personality at age 40 is a good predictor of personality at age 70 (McCrae et al., 2000). The average temporal consistencies of all the Big Five traits for adults are at least .50, the peak of consistency reaching .74 between ages 50 and 70 (Roberts & DelVecchio, 2000). The Big Five structure repeats across cultures (McCrae, 2001); with geographically close cultures having the most similar profiles (Allik & McCrae, 2004).

The assessment of personality in selection aims to find out if the applicant has a suitable personality for the job - both in general and compared to other applicants - and how well he will fit into the organization (Cook, 2009). Personality predicts future work behaviour and performance. According to large meta-analyses (e.g. Barrick & Mount, 1991; Barrick, Mount, & Judge, 2001), personality dimensions, especially conscientiousness, and mostly also emotional stability (i.e. low neuroticism), are related to job performance in all occupational groups. The other core personality dimensions are also valid predictors in different occupations, for example extraversion is related to success in managerial and sales jobs, and emotional stability is related to success in police work (Barrick et al., 2001)

Several methods to assess personality exist, for instance self-report (e.g. questionnaires, interviews, projective tests), other-report (e.g. references, peer ratings), and demonstration (e.g. presentations, group work exercises) (Cook, 2009). This research focused on self-ratings of personality by personality questionnaires. Despite the ongoing discussion about whether personality ought to be measured at all in personnel selection (Morgeson et al., 2007), the personality questionnaires or inventories are frequently used in selection contexts (Kuuskorpi, 2012; Maesen de Sombreff & Hofstee, 1989). Examples of widely used personality inventories are the Personality Research Form, PRF, (Jackson, 1999), which is based on a taxonomy of psychological needs, and the NEO-PI (Costa & McCrae, 1992), which reflects the Big Five construct of personality.

Personality inventories generally contain of large number of items (or statements), and the respondent's task is to assess how well each item describes

him (Cook, 2009, Niitamo, 2003). The items reflect the theoretical construct behind the inventory (e.g. the Big Five), and several items measure each dimension. Items measuring the same dimension are tallied to form raw-scores, which are then compared to the results of a reference group to obtain normative, comparable scores. Personality inventories are relatively inexpensive to use, as they are quick to score and they are can be used simultaneously with large groups (Cook, 2009; Niitamo, 2003).

1.2 Faking

Respondents may receive high scores in self-ratings for several reasons. Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) present three main reasons why self-report may lead to highly favourable scores. First, the respondent may indeed be as good as he presents himself and the results reflect his true personality. Second, the respondent may genuinely not know what he is like, or how he compares to other people, and therefore unintentionally gives self-evaluations that are too positive. The third possible reason is that he does not want to reveal himself openly and honestly, but controls the impression he is giving about himself. According to Paulhus (1991, p.17), faking refers to a "tendency to give answers that make the respondent look good". In this current research the term **faking** was used for both unintentional and intentional distortion of one's image, corresponding to the second and third reasons presented by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994). The term faking therefore refers to some kind of deviation from the truth - whether unintentional or intentional. On the other hand, in this research the term socially desirable responding was seen to include also situations where the respondent really is as good as his description of himself (the first reason).

Valid measurement of personality is needed in personnel selection, as, in particular, conscientiousness and emotional stability predict applicant's future job performance (summary of 15 meta-analyses by Barrick et al., 2001). Faking is often used as an argument against the use of personality inventories, as it may introduce variance into personality test scores that does not originate from personality (e.g. Rosse et al., 1998). In other words, faking may lead to distorted, unreliable personality test scores.

Two meta-analyses have studied the impact of faking on the criterion validity of personality inventories. Ones and colleagues (1996) treated faking as a single construct, whereas Li and Bagger (2006) distinguished between intentional impression management and unintentional self-deception. According to these meta-analyses, faking had no or only a very small impact on the correlation between personality and performance, i.e. criterion-related validity, and therefore faking is unlikely to be a source of error in personnel selection. Some researches (e.g. Morgeson et al., 2007; Ones & Viswesvaran, 1998) have even suggested that faking is not a relevant issue in selection at all.

On the other hand, evidence that faking distorts criterion validity also exists. For example, Mueller-Hanson and colleagues (2003) tested the power of achievement test score to predict performance in tedious and time-consuming tasks, such as problem-solving and matching, designed especially for this experiment. Two groups were instructed to respond as honestly as possible, but the members of the so called incentive group were additionally promised benefits, if they did well in the achievement (i.e. personality) test. The incentive group scored significantly higher than the control group in the achievement test. This suggests that the prospect of receiving benefits caused the respondents to exaggerate their responses - in other words fake. In the control group, the personality test score predicted performance in tedious and time-consuming tasks well (correlation .17), but not in the incentive group (.05). This means that faking decreased the predictive validity of the achievement test. The validity was especially low among the highest achievement scorers in the incentive group - the group that probably would be hired in a real-life context, had achievement score been the selection criterion.

Faking has also an impact on which applicants will be selected. In the second phase of the study by Mueller-Hanson and colleagues (2003), all the respondents were rank ordered by their achievement score and a selection was made from top down. The higher the cut-off point was the higher also was the proportion of incentive respondents. If the members of the incentive group really were better than the others, this would not be a problem, but the performance scores of the incentive group were actually lower than those of the control group. In other words, faking improved the chances of being selected, but conducting the selection on the basis of the faked scores led to wrong selections.

Similarly, Rosse and colleagues (1998) rank-ordered real-life applicants according to their conscientiousness score. Conscientiousness is the personality factor most clearly related to job performance (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Barrick et al., 2001). The results showed that the top positions were occupied by applicants who had – in addition to high conscientiousness scores – high faking scores. The tighter the selection rate, the higher was the portion of high fakers and the average faking score. The individual faking scores were subtracted from the personality scores and the applicants were re-ordered by their personality scores. This dramatically altered the order of applicants at the high end of the selection list, especially when the selection rate was low (less than 20%). Additionally, Christiansen, Goffin, Johnston and Rothstein (1994) found that the tighter the selection, the more the list of selected candidates changed when the personality scores were corrected for faking. In all, this suggests that faking improves the chances of getting selected. The cost of this is borne by the honest applicants, who do not fake and will not be selected (Morgeson et al., 2007).

Individuals who are applying for a job, in particular, tend to present themselves in a positive way (Birkeland, Manson, Kisamore, Brannick & Smith, 2006; Reid-Seiser & Fritzsche, 2001). In this context, there is both a motivation

and an opportunity to fake. The phenomenon is so common that the selector may feel the applicant is not "making an effort", if he does not attempt to prettify his image during the selection (Cook, 2009). On the other hand, of the Finnish psychologists who use tests in their work, only 10% believe that it is possible to fake successfully in tests (Kuuskorpi, 2012, Table 15.1). Nearly 18% of applicants believe that successful faking is possible (Kuuskorpi, 2012, Table 15.2). For the selector making the personnel assessment, it is important to know what kinds of issues applicants commonly fake in real-life selection contexts in order to be aware of possible faking and the impact of faking on the test results. Otherwise, the results will be seen as more valid than they really are. As Cook (2009, p.157) expresses it, personality questionnaires are not tests, they are self-reports.

Konstabel and colleagues (2006) have found that the more valued a trait is, the higher the scores respondents give themselves on that trait, and that this association is particularly strong for job applicants. Also, the correlation between self-ratings of personality and ratings made by friends is lower in a job applicant context than a neutral context (Konstabel et al., 2006). All this suggests that faking is present, especially in the selection context, and therefore it should also be studied in a real-life selection context – as the current research did.

A model of applicant faking (Snell, Sydell & Lueke, 1999) proposes that successful faking requires both motivation and skill. The ability to fake is affected by dispositional factors such as mental ability, experiential factors such as knowledge of job characteristics and selection criteria, and test characteristics such as item subtleness and forced-choice scales. According to their model, motivation depends on demographic factors (e.g. age), dispositional factors (e.g. integrity and locus of control), and perceptual factors such as perceptions of others' behaviour, importance of the outcome, and fairness. Snell, Sydell and Lueke (1999) propose that faking may be a response to a feeling of injustice. This proposition was explored in this research.

The antecedents of faking are important, not only out of academic interest, but also because they might lead to ways of reducing faking in real-life selections. Applicants' perceptions could offer a tool to actively reduce faking, as these perceptions can be actively impacted by selectors (Gilliland, 1993). However, the role of fairness perceptions in faking has not yet been empirically tested in a real-life selection context; the purpose of this research was to fill this gap in the literature.

1.2.1 Sub-types of faking

Paulhus (1984, 1991) presents two types of faking. Faking can be either unintentional self-deception or intentional impression management. **Self-deception** is honest but overly positive self-presentation (Paulhus, 1991, p. 21). Self-deception is associated with e.g. self-esteem, (low) social anxiety, (low) empathic distress (Paulhus & Reid, 1991), adjustment, optimism, a sense of general capability and mental health (for a review, see Paulhus, 1991). Self-

deception can be further divided into two clusters: self-deceptive enhancement, which means highlighting good qualities, and self-deceptive denial, which refers to disclaiming negative qualities (Paulhus, 2002). These tendencies can be measured with items such as "My first impressions always turn out to be right" (self-deceptive enhancement) and "I have never thought about killing someone" (self-deceptive denial) (Paulhus, 2002). These items describe qualities that are rather subjective or at least not directly observable to other people. The level of self-deception is usually fairly stable: it reflects personality characteristics and is more a consistent response style than a temporary response set (Lönnqvist, Paunonen, Tuulio-Henriksson, Lönnqvist & Verkasalo, 2007a).

Impression management refers to self-presentation tailored to an audience (Paulhus, 1991, p. 21). In other words, it means intentionally creating a flawless external picture of oneself order to be seen in a positive light by others. The items used in scales to measure impression management usually describe behaviour that can somehow be objectively verified, e.g. "I always pick up my litter on the street" (Paulhus, 2002). When a respondent answers such items positively, he knows that his answer is not exactly true. Impression management occurs less if the responding is anonymous than when it is done publicly (i.e. un-anonymously) (Paulhus, 1984). Impression management appears to be mostly a temporary response set, and in some extent also a consistent response style; only a small portion of impression management stems from personality (Lönnqvist et al., 2007a).

In addition to degree of awareness (intentional vs. unintentional), faking can be divided according to the topic or content of what is being faked. These sub-types of faking are called egoistic and moralistic bias (Paulhus & John, 1998). Both can be either intentional or unintentional (Paulhus, 2002). An **egoistic bias** refers to a tendency to see oneself as exceptionally talented and socially prominent (Paulhus & John, 1998, p. 1034). This shows for instance as exaggerating one's status, overly highlighting one's success, strength, competencies, intelligence or abilities (Paulhus, 2002). The egoistic bias has been found to show as self-favouring on Big Five dimensions of Neuroticism, Extraversion and Openness (Pauls & Stemmler, 2003).

A **moralistic bias** is a tendency to see oneself as an exceptionally good member of society (Paulhus & John, 1998, p. 1034). This shows as downplaying one's own (social) faults and highlighting well-mannered behaviour, presenting oneself as a nice person and a good citizen (Paulhus, 2002). The moralistic bias has been found to correlate with Big five dimensions of Agreeableness and Conscientiousness (Pauls & Stemmler, 2003).

The egoistic bias is expected to activate especially in competitive circumstances (Paulhus & John, 1998, p.1050) and in job applicants (Paulhus, 2002, p.64), although both egoistic and moralistic meta-factors have been found to be faked in real-life selection context (Lönnqvist et al., 2007a). However, these associations have been studied on meta-factor level. For instance Hough and Ones (2001) are concerned that the meta-factor level is too robust to study and

understand these connections, as wide arrays of variables are combined under these broad factors.

This research aimed to determine whether applicants fake egoistic or moralistic topics. The respondents tend to fake on issues they think are relevant in the particular selection (Birkeland et al., 2006). As egoistic faking is about exaggerating competency, it is supposed to activate in competitive circumstances (Paulhus & John, 1998) and in job applicants (Paulhus, 2002), it was expected that faking in a selection context would occur more in responses to egoistic sub-scales than moralistic sub-scales of a personality inventory.

1.2.2 Warning and other methods to reduce faking

Several methods have been used to reduce faking in the selection context. For example, inventory items have been presented in pairs and the respondent has been forced to choose one from equally desirable items (Cook, 2009; Hough, Eaton, Dunnette, Kamp, & McCloy, 1990). This method, however, does not decrease faking (Hough et al., 1990), and additionally it increases the interdependence of the scales being measured. In choosing one item from the pair, the respondent is forced to reject the other, and this automatically decreases the score of the other scale. Therefore, these so called forced-choice measures are not reliable means to make comparisons between persons (Cook, 2009).

Another method to decrease faking is to use of subtle inventory items (Hough et al., 1990). Each item is formed so that the respondent cannot guess what the most desirable answer would be. This method, however, does not seem to improve the validity of the results: personality scores based on subtle items do not predict outcomes such as work performance any better than scores based on transparent items (Hough et al., 1990).

One method to decrease deliberate faking is to warn the respondents that faking can be detected, and that faking is not recommended (Hough et al., 1990; Kluger & Colella, 1993; McFarland, 2003). For example, the respondents may be told that faking has negative consequences, that they will have to justify their answers later on, or that there is a scale hidden inside the inventory that measures faking. A warning shifts the results of the substance (personality) scales a less desirable direction and also decreases the scores on faking scales (Honkaniemi & Elo, 2006; Kluger & Colella, 1993; McFarland, 2003). When the respondents are warned, the relationships between personality variables decrease, indicating that faking acts a common factor producing erroneous interdependency of personality variables (McFarland, 2003). Additionally, warning increases the response latencies, as respondents need more time to think about their answers (Vasilopoulos, Cucina & McElreath, 2005). More than every fifth respondent is a potential faker (i.e. they claim having completed non-existent job tasks) in an un-warned context; however a warning decreases the proportion of potential fakers to less than 10% (Dwight & Donovan 2003).

A sub-scale to measure faking has been included in many personality inventories, for instance in the PRF, 16PF, and CPI (Goffin & Christiansen,

2003). These scales seem to capture faking well (Ones & Viswesvaran, 1998). The rationale for using these scales is that the respondent's tendency to fake could be taken into account when interpreting the total score (Christiansen et al., 1994). However, faking scale scores should not to be used mechanically to "correct" the personality inventory profile (Cook, 2004). Correcting refers to automatically deducting the effect of faking from the personality scale results according to a pre-determined formula (Christiansen et al., 1994). Respondents, however, do not fake all their responses evenly across the inventory (Smith & Ellingson, 2002), but only those items they think are relevant in the selection in question (Birkeland et al., 2006). Job demands vary and applicants' views on the job demands and relevant points to fake vary, leading to very individual faking patterns (Christiansen et al., 1994). Therefore mechanical correction may lead to incorrect corrections, and hence should not be used (Cook, 2004).

Although mechanical corrections are not recommended, they are widely popular among practicing work and organizational psychologists (Goffin & Christiansen, 2003). To avoid the need of correcting the results afterwards, means to prevent faking in advance ought to be found. This research explored the possibility of using favourable applicant reactions as a way to reduce faking even before it happens.

1.3 Applicants' reactions

The term applicant reactions refer to the attitudes, affects or cognitions a candidate might have about the hiring process (Ryan & Ployhart, 2000, p. 566). The concept of applicant reactions to the selection process can be divided into three facets: face validity perceptions, predictive validity perceptions and fairness perceptions (Chan & Schmitt, 2004). **Face validity perceptions** refers to the degree the test seems to be related to the job. **Predictive validity perceptions** reflect how well the test seems to be able to predict future performance in the job. **Fairness perceptions** refer to the degree the test seems to be fair and just. Together, they represent the overall favourability of applicants' perceptions of, i.e. global applicant reactions to, the test or selection procedure (Chan & Schmitt, 2004). The first two facets, face validity and perceived predictive validity, reflect the perceived job-relatedness of the tests (Chan, Schmitt, Jennings, Clause & Delbridge, 1998; Gilliland & Chan, 2001). Fairness perceptions, on the other hand, refer more to overall fairness judgements of the process and less to the external formal characteristics of the process, as the other two facets do (Hausknecht, Day & Thomas, 2004). In this research, first the relationship between global applicant reactions and faking, and then the role of applicants' personality type in their reactions to the selection process were explored.

Applicant reactions are important, as they have many consequences. Respondents who have more positive reactions to tests perform better in cognitive ability tests (Chan, Schmitt, Sacco, & DeShon, 1998b), view the

selecting organization as an attractive employer, are ready to recommend the organization and accept the possible employment offer, are likely to buy the products of the employing company, and are less willing to sue the selecting company (Hausknecht et al., 2004). Additionally, respondents who have positive reactions to the tests, have higher self efficacy (Hausknecht et al., 2004). In contrast, self efficacy is lowest among respondents who perceive unfair procedure, but are selected anyway (Ployhart & Ryan, 1997). Negatively viewed treatment during the selection process is especially critical as it leads to extreme reactions, whereas positive treatment leads only to mildly positive reactions (Gilliland & Steiner, 2001). An overview of applicant reaction consequences is presented in Gilliland and Steiner (2001).

Naturally, the applicant is interested in the outcome of the selection process (i.e. whether one gets selected or not), but, with respect to the applicant's reactions and intentions, the applicant's perceptions about the process itself are at least as equally important as the applicant's perceptions about the selection decision (Byrne & Cropanzano, 2001; Cropanzano & Ambrose, 2001; Ployhart & Ryan, 1997). Fairness information is important to people, as it tells whether authorities can be trusted and whether one is a valued and respected member of one's group (van den Bos, Lind, & Wilke, 2001)

1.3.1 Determinants of applicant reactions to the selection process

One of the objectives of this research was to explore the role of personality, specifically personality type, in applicant reactions to the selection process. First I will make a brief overview on current models of applicant reactions in order to see how these models address the role of personality in applicant reactions. I will then present some earlier findings on the relationship between personality and applicant reactions.

The model of applicant reactions most widely applied is that by Gilliland (Gilliland, 1993, 1994; Gilliland & Chan, 2001). It is based on organizational justice theory. Organizational justice theory makes a distinction between distributional and procedural justice: in addition to the outcome of the selection (i.e. whether one gets selected or not), the applicant's perception of the fairness of the selection process is important to the applicant (overview of organizational justice theory in Gilliland, 1993). Gilliland's (1993) model presents the determinants of applicants' views about the selection process and outcome. These determinants are called justice rules, and a violation of, or alternatively compliance with these rules creates a perception of (un)fairness (Gilliland, 1993). The justice rules include formal characteristics (e.g. job relatedness and opportunity to perform), informational aspects (e.g. selection information and honesty), interpersonal aspects (e.g. two-way communication and propriety of questions), and aspects related to the outcome (equity and equality). However, these justice rules all concern external factors, such as interpersonal behavior and characteristics of the methods, not the applicants' attributes. The personality of the applicant is not included as a determinant of

applicants' reactions in this model. Gilliland's procedural justice rules explain 53% of the variance in process fairness perceptions (McFarland, 2003), leaving room for other determinants.

In another widely applied framework by Arvey and Sackett (1993), factors such as applicant knowledge of the selection content (e.g. job relatedness, relevant coverage, invasiveness, ease of faking), the administration of the tests (e.g. consistency, confidentiality, information given), and the context (e.g. selection ratio) affect how the selection process is perceived. Applicants' personality as an antecedent of reactions is not included in this framework either. Arvey's earlier work (Arvey, Strickland, Drauden & Martin, 1990) is a scale for test attitudes, and includes two dimensions that are personality-related (external attribution and general need achievement); however personality as such is not mentioned as a factor in test attitudes.

Personality is, however, included in some applicant reaction models. A heuristic model by Ryan and Ployhart (2000) includes personal traits such as affectivity and openness as potential antecedents of perceptions. The model proposes that the mechanism behind this could be that different personalities find different aspects of selection procedures as job-relevant, and that these perceptions of job-relevance in turn affect the applicant's reactions. For example, a person who prefers to work alone does not find interpersonal skills as relevant as a sociable person does, and might think that having good interpersonal skills as a selection criterion is unnecessary or unfair (Ryan & Ployhart, 2000).

An updated theoretical model by Hausknecht and colleagues (2004), based on the works of Gilliland (1993) and Ryan and Ployhart (2000), proposes that individual characteristics such as work and test experience, demographics and personality affect perceptions of the characteristics of the process and attitudes towards tests. However, when Hausknecht and colleagues (2004) tested the impact of conscientiousness and neuroticism on applicant reactions, they found no effect.

To recap, some of these models (e.g. Gilliland, 1993) do not include personality at all, and others are either not very detailed about personality's role in applicant reactions to the selection process (e.g. Ryan & Ployhart, 2000) or have not yet provided evidence for such a role (e.g. Hausknecht et al., 2004). In this research the role of personality on applicant reactions to selection process in a real-life selection context was explored. If personality has a link to applicant reactions, it should be included in the (existing and future) applicant reaction models and controlled for in studies examining the role of other determinants on applicant reactions.

1.3.2 Personality as a determinant of applicant reactions

Personality has been associated with individual attitudes, perceptions and reactions. On the level of separate traits, for example, neurotic persons tend to experience negative affects, extravert individuals are optimistic and people low in openness tend to prefer the familiar to the novel (Costa & McCrae, 1992). In

the work-related context, neuroticism, conscientiousness, and extraversion have been found to be associated with job satisfaction (Judge et al., 2002).

Empirical research on the relationship between applicant reactions and applicant personality traits also exists. Some of the studies have found a connection between personality and applicant reactions, and some have not. Table 1 presents examples of empirical findings supporting and contradicting the supposed connection between personality and reactions. As seen in Table 1, findings on the relationship between personality traits and applicant reactions are rather fragmented and inconsistent. For instance, a study on real-life applicants found no connection between the five major personality traits and perceived fairness of the selection process (Truxillo, Bauer, Campion & Paronto, 2006). In other studies, perceptions of the process justice have been found to correlate with agreeableness and emotional stability (Bernerth, Feild, Giles & Cole, 2006), and perceptions of the job-relatedness of personality tests and test beliefs have been found to correlate with openness (Van Vianen, Taris, Scholten & Schinkel, 2004).

The previous research on applicant reactions has focused on isolated personality traits, using the so-called variable-centered approach, examining the role of a single personality trait at a time. This line of research presumes a linear relationship between a personality trait and an outcome, often measured by a simple correlation (Bergman & Trost, 2006). Additionally, many of these findings are from a hypothetical context, e.g. students were acting as applicants (see Table 1). However, the selection context (authentic or hypothetical) affects applicant reactions (Hausknecht et al., 2004), and more studies from real-life selection contexts are needed.

Chan and Schmitt (2004) note that studies of individual differences are lacking, and that the relationship between personality and applicant reactions should be studied. Similarly, Ryan and Ployhart (2000) draw attention to the need of research on individual differences affecting applicant perceptions and reactions. This research contributed to this field by providing empirical evidence of the relationship between personality and applicant reactions in an authentic real-life process of selection for entry to educational programs in a vocational school. The role of personality was examined from the point of view of the whole personality, i.e. personality type, by applying a person-centered approach (Laursen & Hoff, 2006; Magnusson, 1999).

TABLE 1 Findings between personality traits and applicant reactions on selection process.

Personality variable	Applicant reaction studied	Key findings on the relationship found between a personality variable (column 1) and applicant reaction variable (column 2).	Reference
Neuroticism	Applicant perception of procedural justice.	Low average correlation.	Hausknecht et al., 2004, meta-analysis, hypothetical context
	Importance ratings of selection system content (e.g. job relatedness, coverage, objectivity) and selection system development (e.g. validity evidence, job analysis).	No correlation with importance of content, correlation with importance of system development.	Viswesvaran and Ones, 2004, authentic context: real workers, not applicants
	Structure fairness (job-relatedness, information, opportunity to perform, reconsideration opportunity, feedback).	No correlation.	Truxillo et al., 2006, authentic context: real applicants
	Procedural justice	Negative correlation (only accepted applicants, not rejected applicants)	Bernerth et al., 2006, hypothetical context
	Process fairness, face validity, perceived predictive validity.	No correlation in either warned or un-warned condition.	McFarland, 2003, hypothetical context
Extraversion	Importance ratings of selection system content (e.g. job relatedness, coverage, objectivity) and selection system development (e.g. validity evidence, job analysis).	No correlation with importance of content, correlation with importance of system development.	Viswesvaran and Ones, 2004, authentic context: real workers, not applicants
	Structure fairness (job-relatedness, information, opport. to perform, reconsideration opportunity, feedback).	No correlation.	Truxillo et al., 2006, authentic context: real applicants
	Process fairness, face validity, perceived predictive validity.	Correlation with predictive validity in un-warned condition, but no other correlations.	McFarland, 2003, hypothetical context

(Table 1 continued)

Openness	Importance ratings of selection system content (e.g. job relatedness, coverage, objectivity) and selection system development (e.g. validity evidence, job analysis).	No correlation.	Viswesvaran and Ones, 2004, authentic context: real workers, not applicants
	Structure fairness (job-relatedness, information, opportunity to perform, reconsideration opportunity, feedback).	No correlation.	Truxillo et al., 2006, authentic context: real applicants
	Process fairness, face validity, perceived predictive validity.	Correlation with face validity, no correlation w process fairness or perceived predictive validity.	Wiechmann and Ryan, 2003, hypothetical context
	Job relatedness of personality tests, test beliefs.	Correlation with job-relatedness and test beliefs, which in turn affect further fairness perceptions.	Van Vianen et al., 2004, authentic context: real applicants
	Process fairness, face validity, perceived predictive validity.	No correlation in either un-warned or warned condition.	McFarland, 2003, hypothetical context
Agreeable-ness	Importance ratings of selection system content (e.g. job relatedness, coverage, objectivity) and selection system development (e.g. validity evidence, job analysis).	No correlation.	Viswesvaran and Ones, 2004, authentic context: real workers, not applicants
	Structure fairness (job-relatedness, information, opportunity to perform, reconsideration opportunity, feedback).	No correlation.	Truxillo et al., 2006, authentic context: real applicants
	Procedural justice.	Correlation (only accepted applicants, not rejected applicants).	Bernerth et al., 2006, hypothetical context
	Process fairness, face validity, perceived predictive validity.	No corr. in either un-warned or warned cond.	McFarland, 2003, hypothet. context

(Table 1 continued)

Conscientiousness	Applicant perception of procedural justice.	Low average correlation.	Hausknecht et al., 2004, meta-analysis, hypothetical context
	Importance ratings of selection system content (e.g. job relatedness, coverage, objectivity) and selection system development (e.g. validity evidence, job analysis).	No correlation.	Viswesvaran and Ones, 2004, authentic context: real workers, not applicants
	Structure fairness (job-relatedness, information, opportunity to perform, reconsideration opportunity, feedback).	No correlation.	Truxillo et al., 2006, authentic context: real applicants
	Process fairness, face validity, perceived predictive validity.	Correlation with Predictive validity in unwarned condition, but no other correlations.	McFarland, 2003, hypothetical context

1.4 Person-centred approach

Two main approaches have been applied in psychological personality research: the variable-centred, or variable-oriented, approach, and the person-centred, or person-oriented, approach (Magnusson, 1999). In the **variable-centred approach** the focus is on research of single variables, for example the associations between a predictor variable and an outcome variable, or the stability of variables (Magnusson, 1999). Traditionally, the variable approach has dominated research in this field (Magnusson, 1999, p. 235). The variable approach assumes that "the population is homogenous with respect to how the predictors operate on the outcomes" (Laursen & Hoff, 2006, p. 379). The **person-centred approach**, in contrast, is interested in the patterns of variable values, and in how such patterns differ across individuals. The person-centred approach regards personality as a whole entity, a personality type, a combination of personality traits (Laursen & Hoff, 2006; Magnusson, 1999). The person approach "identifies groups or types of individuals who share particular attributes or relations of attributes" (Laursen & Hoff, 2006, p. 379). The values of the variables are not important in themselves: they are only the means to form configurations of variables, complex dynamic systems, which in turn form individual persons (Bergman, 2001).

The person-centred approach focuses on differences in the different configurations of variables, but is not a classical typology. Classical typologies are static, do not take contextual factors into consideration, and do not perceive processes, or allow development (Magnusson, 1999). One of the main principles of the person-centered approach is the recognition of nonlinearity (Bergman, 2001). Variables combine together to form complex systems, and linearity rarely applies to such systems. The nonlinear nature of these systems, however, does not rule out the possibility of strong interactions (Bergman, 2001).

The person-centred approach has several advantages (Donnellan & Robins, 2010). First, a typology provides an efficient, high level system of classification similar to those in other sciences, such as biology. The person approach classifies people (individuals) whereas the variable approach classifies attributes. Second, the person approach views the whole, complete individual as the actor, not the isolated traits inside the individual. It is the whole individuals, who perceive events and engage in action, not the traits. Third, a typology presents new potential moderator variables, for example in explaining why people react differently to the same intervention. Finally, a typology is a useful, simple and appealing way to communicate the results of personality research to the public (Donnellan & Robins, 2010).

The variable-centred and person-centred approaches do not compete or rule each other out; instead, they complement each other, providing different ways to understand personality (Laursen & Hoff, 2006). Both approaches can be applied in the same study (Bergman & Trost, 2006). On average, personality types seem to have about the same level of validity in predicting future

attributes as separate personality dimensions (Asendorpf & Denissen, 2006). More important than debating about the superiority or inferiority of these two approaches is to choose the one most appropriate for the research question at hand (Bergman & Trost, 2006).

The person-centred approach presumes that personality variables influence each other and that there are no straightforward relations between personal variables and outcomes that would apply to the whole population (Laursen & Hoff, 2006). For instance, Kinnunen, Metsäpelto, Feldt, Kokko, Tolvanen, Kinnunen, Leppänen and Pulkkinen (in press) show that although the single trait of extraversion has been seen to somewhat predict good health, it is the combination of high extraversion and high consciousness that predicts subjective health well. The interconnectedness between personality variables may be the explanation for the inconsistent results obtained from studies investigating a simple correlation between applicants' personality traits and their reactions to selection (presented in Table 1). The person-centered approach has been widely applied in, for example, developmental psychology, studying change in longitudinal data (see e.g. the theme-number of the Merrill-Palmer Quarterly 2006, 52). To my knowledge, however, no previous research has used a person approach to study the relation between personality and applicant reactions. This research filled this gap.

1.4.1 Personality types

The person-centred approach operates with personality types (Laursen & Hoff, 2006). Three classic personality types – Resilient, Overcontrolled and Undercontrolled – have repeatedly been found in research (e.g. Asendorpf & van Aken, 1999; Herzberg & Roth, 2006; Robins, John, Caspi, Moffitt, & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1996; Roth & von Colliani, 2007). According to the overview by Herzberg & Roth (2006), the **Resilient** personality type is a combination of low neuroticism and high conscientiousness. The Resilient person's agreeableness, extraversion and openness are at least average, if not high. The **Overcontrolled** personality type is a combination of high neuroticism and low extroversion and low openness. The **Undercontrolled** personality type has low conscientiousness, above average extraversion and openness, and at least average neuroticism (Herzberg & Roth, 2006, Table 1).

Other types have also been found, for example the Reserved type, characterized by low openness (Roth & von Colliani, 2007), the Confident type, who scores high on extraversion and openness (Roth & Herzberg, 2007), and the Non-desirable type, who has high neuroticism and low conscientiousness (Rammstedt, Riemann, Angleitner & Borkenau, 2004).

The number of personality types found varies between studies. As many as seven (Pulkkinen, 1996) or eight (Vollrath & Torgersen, 2000) have been reported. Some findings suggest that five personality types have better predictive power compared to the three-type solution (Herzberg & Roth, 2006; Roth & von Colliani, 2007). Some studies have not been able to replicate all three classic types. For instance, 5 types have been found, but the

Overcontrolled type has not been among them (Roth & von Colliani, 2007), and in the self-assessed Undercontrolled profile has shifted to Undesirable profile in peer-ratings (Rammstedt et al., 2004). High consistency in the number of types cannot be expected due to differences in, for instance, samples, methods of personality assessment (self or other) or methods of deriving types (e.g. Asendorpf, 2002; De Fruyt, Mervielde, & Van Leeuwen, 2002; Rammstedt et al., 2004).

Once the types have been derived from a sample, they have remained very stable over time. For example, the same sample of 304 adults was measured three times during 17 years. The personality types and the individuals representing each type showed a high degree of stability (Kinnunen et al., in press).

The person-centered approach and types have also produced criticism. The replicability and consistency of the types has been questioned (Asendorpf, 2002; Costa, Herbst, McCrae, Samuels & Ozer, 2002), as the type profiles are not always similar. Research has also shown that factor scores often predict outcomes (such as ego-control) better than types (Asendorpf, 2003; Costa, et al., 2002). Additionally, it has been proposed that the so called Resilient type is no more than a reflection of faking or social desirability (Roth & Herzberg, 2007). While the Resilient type, especially, seems to be influenced by faking, this is only to the degree that separate personality dimensions reflect faking. The correlations between separate dimensions and faking are higher than the correlations between types and faking. Hence, the types as such are not merely an artifact of social desirability (Roth & Herzberg, 2007).

In order to find out if personality is related to applicants' reactions to the selection process, this research first explored what kinds of personality types can be found among the applicants to a vocational school for fire and rescue personnel, and then described what differences are found between them in their reactions to the selection process.

1.4.2 Personality types and reactions

Personality types have been found to be related to various reactions. Resilient is usually the best adjusted of the types (Asendorpf, 2001). For example, Resilient students have self-reported less hostility and less aggression than the other types (Grumm & von Colliani, 2009) and Resilient children have been found to be unlikely to perceive hostile intent in other peoples' actions and to believe that aggressive reaction is needed in an unclear situation (Hart, Burock, London, Atkins & Bonilla-Santiago, 2005). In addition, persons with an Individuated (similar to Resilient) personality profile reach the highest levels of ego development, which requires integration and coordination of impulse control, interpersonal style, conscious preoccupations and cognitive style (John, Pals & Westenberg, 1998, p. 1095).

Overcontrolled persons have been found, for instance, to have a high level of generalized prejudice, including racial/ethnical prejudice, sexism, and prejudice against homosexuals and intellectually disabled persons (Ekehammar

& Akrami, 2003). An Insecure personality type (who resembles the Overcontrolled type) showed tendencies to more dysfunctional coping and less positive coping (Vollrath & Torgersen, 2000). The Overcontrolled type seems to view the circumstances negatively: Kinnunen et al. (in press) found that the Overcontrolled perceived their own health most negatively, even though there was no real difference between the types in their objective physical health.

Undercontrolled persons have been found to have a low predisposition to respond with prejudice to any out-group (Roth & von Colliani, 2007), more antisocial behavior (Asendorpf, 2001) and low generalized prejudice (Ekehammar & Akrami, 2003).

Taken together, the previous research (e.g. Hart et al., 2005; Kinnunen et al., in press) indicates that some types seem to have more negative perceptions than others. This research aimed to find out if this applies also to applicant reactions. The possible association between personality and applicant reactions to selection process was explored from the viewpoint of personality types, by investigating the differences in the reactions of different personality types' to selection process. If such a connection would exist, then personality had a place in applicant reaction models. Based on their low hostility (Grumm & von Colliani, 2009), the Resilient type was expected to report the most favorable reactions, and based on their high prejudice (Ekehammar & Akrami, 2003) and negative views (Kinnunen et al., in press), the Overcontrolled type was expected to report the least favorable reactions.

1.5 Research questions and hypothesis

This research addressed three areas of personnel assessment: faking in the self-assessment of personality, applicant reactions to a selection process and the role of personality in applicant reactions (see Figure 1 in Introduction). All the studies in this research used data from a real-life selection context.

1. To what extent do applicants fake their answers on the egoistic and moralistic sub-scales of a personality self-report measure in a selection context? (Study I)

When applicants describe their personality through a personality inventory, they may be prone to prettify their answers, in other words fake. Faking may happen with respect to egoistic issues or to moralistic issues. The egoistic side of the personality is linked to competence and ability. The moralistic side of the personality is linked to ethics and decency. As the egoistic bias is expected to activate especially in competitive circumstances and in job applicants, it was expected that faking in a selection context would occur more on the egoistic sub-scales than moralistic sub-scales.

2. Do applicants fake less if their reactions to the selection process are favourable? (Study II)

Applicants may react differently to the same selection process. In previous studies positive reactions to a selection procedure have been associated with favourable outcomes. If respondents feel that the selection methods are valid and the selection process is conducted in a professional manner, they may feel that they can present themselves as they are, and faking is not needed. Therefore, it was expected that applicants' favourable reactions would be associated with low faking.

3. Is the respondent's personality type related to his reactions to the selection process? (Study III)

The frameworks used to study applicant reactions emphasize the role of external factors on reactions. However, personality also has a role in many perceptions and attitudes. Some findings in support of linear relations between separate personality traits and applicant reactions, and on the relation of a person's personality type and his attitudes or reactions to external circumstances have been reported. Therefore it was expected that personality type would be related to applicant reactions to the selection procedure and that Resilient types would have the most favourable and Overcontrolled types the most unfavourable reactions.

2 METHODS

2.1 Participants and procedure

The participants were real-life applicants to a vocational school for rescue workers. The school takes new students twice a year, in spring and autumn. The data were collected in the course of three intakes during 2004-2005. In all the intakes, the applicants were applying to one of three choices of a career stream: fire-fighter, emergency services dispatcher (i.e. persons who respond to 112 emergency calls) or fire-and-rescue management.

The selection procedure was conducted in two phases: first a physical/theoretical exam and then a psychological assessment. The psychological phase was in the focus of the present study. The psychological phase lasted 6-8 hours and consisted of two interviews, a group discussion exercise, some other simulations, ability tests such as reasoning and visual tests, and several inventories, including a Personality Research Form (Jackson, 1999). About two-thirds of the applicants passed the psychological phase.

The psychological phase was administered by a team comprising a senior psychologist and a junior psychologist. The senior psychologist remained the same throughout the data collection process. The junior psychologist changed between intakes. A thorough planning and strict rules were applied to maintain the process standard across the intakes.

In all, 501 applicants participated in the psychological assessment during the data collection period. As a standard procedure, all applicants are asked to give their consent for their test results to be used in scientific research; 93% of the present applicants (467 out of 501) gave their consent. The only female applying for an entry to the fireman career stream was omitted from the research data, as her responses would have represented the whole cell of female firemen. Consequently, data on 466 persons was used in the analysis.

After completing the psychological phase of the entrance exam, all the participants were asked to fill out two voluntary inventories: one measuring their reactions to the selection tests and one on faking. The only exception was

the last batch (141 persons): they were given only the reactions inventory due to the comments from previous batches that the long voluntary inventories excessively extended an already long day. The reactions scale was considered more important for the present research purposes and therefore the faking scale was not administered to the last batch. The rationale was to achieve a higher response rate, if the voluntary part would consist of only one inventory. Of the examinees, who received both scales, 67% responded. Of the examinees, who received only the reactions inventory, 89% responded.

Two of the three studies in this research focus on faking. One method to affect faking is to warn respondents about the presence of a so called faking scale in the personality measure (Hough, 1998; Kluger & Colella, 1993). Therefore half (258) of the respondents were warned about that a faking scale (i.e. desirability) was present in the personality inventory, and half (208) received standard instructions. The rationale behind this procedure was that the warned respondents would give less faked responses than the un-warned ones.

The warning was given orally by the junior psychologist administering the exams. The administrator said (in Finnish) "This questionnaire gives us many kinds of information. It also shows the level of socially desirable responding, which means the tendency to enhance the impression we give about ourselves. It is therefore recommended that you answer as genuinely and honestly as possible". While giving this information, the administrator held up the PRF item booklet to stress that the message concerned this specific test.

For experimental purposes it would be optimal to totally randomize who gets the warning and who does not. In practice, this would mean that during a single examination day some of the examinees would receive different instructions from those given to the others. The randomization procedure would have led to three practical problems. Firstly, this would have been challenging to arrange in the exam hall, where instructions were given to the whole batch simultaneously. Secondly, in was deemed ethical to issue the same instructions to all the participants in the same intake. Thirdly, it would have been impossible to control the spread of the additional information in a setting where some of the participants receive that information, and some of the participants (possibly their acquaintances) in the same batch do not. Therefore, the data were gathered on separate occasions: first, the data on the respondents with the standard instructions (intake in spring 2004) and then the data on the respondents who received the warning (intakes in autumn 2004 and spring 2005).

Study I consisted of 466 persons who were applying for the fireman, emergency services dispatcher or management career streams (i.e. the whole sample). Study II consisted of 180 persons who had responded to both voluntary measures. Management applicants were omitted from this study due to the imbalanced groups regarding the warning among manager applicants (only 16% of the manager applicants who responded both inventories had been warned, as opposed to 50% and 57% in fireman and emergency services dispatcher groups, respectively). Study III consisted of 218 persons. All the

warned respondents in the data who had filled out the voluntary inventory about fairness perceptions were included in this study (Table 2).

2.2 Measures

Personality. Personality was measured with the Finnish version of the Personality Research Form (PRF) (Niitamo, 1997), which is based on Jackson's PRF (Jackson, 1999). It has been adapted for Finnish populations and is currently the most widely used personality inventory in Finland (Kuuskorpi, 2012). The Finnish version of the PRF covers only some of the original PRF sub-scales: dominance, exhibition, achievement, succorance, affiliation, nurturance, cognitive structure, order, impulsivity, defendence, aggression, harmavoidance, sentience, and desirability. Each sub-scale consists of 16 items. The respondent marks them as either true or false. Responses are tallied to form 14 raw scores which can be then transformed to normative scores. Raw scores were used throughout these studies.

In Study I, the PRF personality dimensions were rated as egoistic, moralistic, or neither. The rating was conducted by three work and organizational psychologists who are experienced personnel assessors and proficient PRF users. Raters were given descriptions of the egoistic and moralistic biases, and then they independently rated each PRF sub-scale as measuring either the egoistic or moralistic trait, or neither of these. Only sub-scales that were unanimously rated as moralistic or egoistic were included in Study I. The rating result was also supported theoretically (Paulhus, 2002; Paulhus & John, 1998) and by previous research (Costa & McCrae, 1988; Pauls & Stemmler, 2003).

In Study III, the personality dimensions were classified into the Big Five categories according to Ashton, Jackson, Helmes and Paunonen (1998) and Costa and McCrae (1988). Defendence and aggression represented neuroticism; dominance, exhibition and affiliation represented extraversion; low harmavoidance and sentience represented openness; succorance and nurturance represented agreeableness; and achievement, cognitive structure, order and low impulsivity represented conscientiousness.

Faking. Impression management and self-deception were measured with a Finnish version (Lindeman & Verkasalo, 1995) of the Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR) version 6, form 40 (Paulhus, 1991). In general, faking scales seem to be valid measures of faking, as they react to instructions to fake (Hough, et al., 1990), and job applicants score higher on faking scale than other people (Marshall, de Fruyt, Rolland & Bagby, 2005; Rosse et al., 1998). The BIDR is the most commonly used measure of impression management and self-deception (Ones et al., 1996).

Four of the original items were omitted due to inappropriate or illegal content in the selection context (e.g. "I never read sexy books or magazines"). In a small pilot survey (N=57) these were the items most often left unanswered.

Additionally, the item "I have sometimes doubted my ability as a lover" was rephrased as "I have sometimes doubted my interpersonal abilities". Hence, both sub-scales consisted of 18 items. The Likert-type response scale varied between 1 (fully disagree) and 7 (fully agree). The item scores in negative direction were reverse scored so that a high score represented high impression management or self-deception. An arithmetic mean was calculated for both sub-scales. This continuous scoring is recommended instead of the original dichotomous scoring, where only extreme responses are counted (Stöber, Dette & Musch, 2002).

It has been suggested (e.g. Lönnqvist et al., 2007a; Paulhus, 2002) that the BIDR scale for impression management measures moralistic bias, and the scale for self-deception measures egoistic bias. However, in this study the scales were used in their original purposes: only to separate the degree of awareness, i.e. measure the concepts of impression management and self-deception.

Applicant reactions. The applicants' reactions to the selection procedure (in particular the psychological part) were measured with a scale adapted from Chan and colleagues (1998b). It has three sub-scales: Face validity perceptions, Predictive validity perceptions and Fairness perceptions. Each is measured by three items with a Likert -type scale from 1 (fully disagree) to 7 (fully agree). The scores for the negative items were reversed so that a high score indicated favourable reactions. An arithmetic mean was calculated for each sub-scale. All the items referred specifically to the "psychological tests" in order to clearly distinguish this part of the selection process. A latent variable representing global applicant reactions similar to that used by Chan and colleagues (Chan et al., 1998b) was formed in Study II.

2.3 Analyses

Study I examined the extent to which applicants fake the egoistic and moralistic personality dimensions in selection context. Faking was manipulated by warning one group of respondents against faking while giving the standard instruction to the other group. Multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) was used to detect the main effect of faking. Analyses of covariance (ANCOVA) were used for each PRF sub-scale to locate the dimensions that were typically faked.

Study II examined the association between applicant reactions and faking. First, the construct validity of the scales used was tested with confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Then the association between applicant reactions and faking was studied with structural equation modelling (SEM). A latent variable of global reactions was formed from three factors (face validity perceptions, predictive validity perceptions, and fairness perceptions) of applicant reactions.

Study III examined the applicants' personality types, and the association between these and the applicants' reactions. The personality types were identified through latent profile analysis (LPA) of the applicants' personality

scores. To determine the most appropriate number of personality types (i.e. latent classes) the Bayesian information criterion (BIC), the bootstrap likelihood ratio test (BLRT), the entropy, and average latent class probabilities were used. The differences between the personality types in their reactions were examined with analysis of covariance (ANCOVA).

The participants, variables with their reliabilities, and analyses used in studies I - III are collected in Table 2.

TABLE 2 Summary of the participants, variables (reliabilities) and analyses used in Studies I-III.

	Participants	Variables	Analyses
Study I	466 persons (334 male) fire-fighters (213), management (118), emergency services dispatchers (135) warned (258), un-warned (208)	9 PRF -personality variables (Jackson, 1999, Niitamo, 1997), alphas .58 - .82 Controlled variables: age, gender, faculty	MANCOVA ANCOVA
Study II	180 persons (121 male) fire-fighters (113), emergency services dispatchers (67) warned (86), un-warned (94)	Face validity perceptions, Predictive validity perceptions, Fairness perceptions (Chan et al., 1998b), Cronbach alphas .70 - .72 Impression management, Self-deception (Paulhus, 1991) Cronbach alphas .64 - .84	Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) Structural Equation Model (SEM)
Study III	218 persons (141 male) fire-fighters (109), management (31), emergency services dispatchers (78) all were warned	13 PRF - personality variables (Jackson, 1999, Niitamo, 1997), Cronbach alphas .59 - .85 Face validity perceptions, Predictive validity perceptions, Fairness perceptions (Chan et al., 1998b), Cronbach alphas .62 - .63 Controlled variables: gender, age, self-assessment of test-performance, personality traits	Latent Profile Analysis (LPA) Regression analysis ANCOVA

3 OVERVIEW OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

Study I. Faking of moralistic and egoistic issues.

The study examined faking on the egoistic and moralistic sub-scales. Half of the participants had been warned against faking. The comparison between the warned and un-warned groups revealed that the warning had an effect on personality inventory (PRF) results, leading to less desirable personality profiles. Applicants faked selectively, not evenly across the inventory. Warning affected four out of the nine sub-scales of the PRF. Two of these were egoistic (achievement and succorance) and two were moralistic (defendence and nurturance). This indicates that both kinds of scales, egoistic and moralistic, are vulnerable to faking in the real-life selection context – and not just the egoistic ones, which are more related to professional competencies.

Study II. The relation between applicant reactions and faking.

The study examined whether applicant reactions to the selection procedure are associated with the degree of faking. If favourable reactions lead to less faking, facilitating positive reactions would offer a potential method to reduce faking. However, positive applicant reactions were associated with more faking, not less. More precisely, applicant reactions were related with intentional faking, i.e. impression management, but not with unintentional faking, i.e. self-deception. In addition to this main finding, the study provided support for the construct validity of faking and global applicant reactions scales.

Study III. The relation between personality types and applicant reactions.

The study investigated the extent to which the respondent's personality type is related to his selection process reactions. This study used a person-oriented approach and analyzed the data to identify personality types.

Four types were found:

- Resilient (45% of the respondents) with high conscientiousness, below average neuroticism and above average extraversion and agreeableness.
- Undercontrolled (10%) with very high neuroticism and extraversion and very low conscientiousness.
- Overcontrolled (13%) with very low extraversion and agreeableness and high neuroticism
- A new type (32%) was also found, with low conscientiousness and below average extraversion. On the sub-scale level, this new type was characterized by low dominance(E), low achievement(C), low cognitive structure(C), low order(C), and high impulsivity(C). Based on the sub-scale level personality profile, the new type was called Bohemian.

Among the four types, applicants with an Overcontrolled personality type showed the most negative reactions to the selection process, and applicants with a Resilient or Bohemian personality type showed the most positive reactions. The reactions of the Undercontrolled group fell between the reactions of the other groups. More precisely, personality type was associated with the applicants' perceptions about the fairness of the selection process, but not with their views about the face validity or predictive validity of the selection process. The association between personality type and reactions remained even when controlling for all sub-scale level personality scores.

4 GENERAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Study I examined whether applicants are more inclined to fake egoistic personality traits than moralistic personality traits. The study found that both egoistic and moralistic personality dimensions are faked in a real-life selection context. The applicants were willing to present themselves as achievement-oriented and independent, and also as accommodating and nurturing. Previous research has found that applicants fake the dimensions of personality that they view as relevant to the job in question (Birkeland et al., 2006; Kluger & Colella, 1993). The hypothesis was that applicants would fake mainly on the competence-related (egoistic) dimensions, and less on the socially relevant (moralistic) sub-scales; however, the results did not confirm this hypothesis. These results suggest that in a real-life selection context presenting oneself as a congenial colleague is considered to be as relevant as representing oneself as a capable and strong professional. In other words, the applicants perceive social issues to be as important as professional issues in the selection context.

Some sub-scales were not faked. It is important to note that the scales applicants chose to fake in this current sample would not necessarily be faked in a different sample. Applicants fake selectively (Birkeland et al., 2006; Kluger & Colella, 1993), and the applicants for entry to this school for fire and rescue personnel felt that these particular issues were worth faking. For instance, the applicants in this sample wished to present themselves as independent. This dimension, however, would not necessarily be perceived as equally desired in some other vocational school or profession, for instance in a highly regulated job governed by strictly defined rules. However, the main finding (i.e. both professional and social issues can be faked) would probably be repeated in other occupational settings as well, for there are few occupations that do not require social contacts of any kind.

Study II examined if applicants' reactions to the selection procedure are related to faking. The results showed that favourable applicant reactions were associated with intentional, conscious faking, i.e. impression management, but not with unintentional, unconscious faking, i.e. self-deception. The more positive reactions the applicants reported the stronger was their inclination to

fake intentionally. The applicants' reactions were measured before they knew how well they had performed in the selection process. Therefore their reactions were not affected by the favourability of the selection outcome (i.e. if they were selected or not), but were purely a response to the process itself (Cook, 2009).

This finding was contrary to the second research hypothesis in which a negative association was expected. The hypothesis proposed that if applicants felt that the selection procedure was fair, they would reciprocate by faking less. The present finding was also contrary to previous findings from laboratory settings (e.g. Chan et al., 1998b; McFarland, 2003), and models (e.g. Snell et al., 1999) where applicants' positive perceptions of fairness reduced faking. One possible reason why the current results were not in accordance with previous findings from laboratory settings could be the high motivation of the applicants in this real-life selection context. It can be presumed that the present applicants were highly motivated by the facts that about one-third of them will be rejected as a result of these tests, that there are only two schools for these occupational lines in Finland, and that failing would mean a long wait for the next opportunity. Previous research has found that respondents' test attitudes are associated with their work sample performance (Arvey et al., 1990) and that applicant reactions correlate with motivation (Chan et al., 1998; Gilliland, 1993; Hausknecht et al., 2004). This indicates that a test that appears to be valid increases applicants' motivation to perform well in that test. In ability tests, a good performance means demonstrating one's maximum capacity, but in an inventory an attempt to perform "well" can lead to faking (Schmit & Ryan, 1992). This can be seen in findings that the criterion validity of personality inventories is lower when respondents are motivated (Schmit & Ryan, 1992).

Another issue to discuss is the possibility of personality acting as a common factor underlying the association found between reactions and faking. Agreeableness is associated with both perceived fairness of employee selection (Bernerth et al., 2006) and impression management (Li & Bagger, 2006), which raises the possibility of agreeableness explaining the association between reactions and faking. However, the correlation between agreeableness and faking disappears in a neutral context and when another person performs the personality ratings (Lönnqvist et al., 2007a; Ones et al., 1996). This indicates that personality per se does not affect faking, but that the selection context affects both personality self-ratings and faking, shifting them both in a more desirable direction. Additionally, I examined the potential mediating role of personality after Study II was published, by regressing faking on reactions and personality types simultaneously. Both showed a main effect. This indicates that reactions and faking are associated irrespective of the impact of personality.

The content of the faking scale also merits discussion. The BIDR impression management scale used in this study measures moralistic content (Lönnqvist et al., 2007a; Paulhus, 2002) as well as intentional faking. Moralistic content refers to being a nice, courteous person (see chapter 1.2.1 Sub-types of faking). It is possible that a moralistic person, in addition of scoring high on the impression management scale, also seeks to present himself as a person who

trusts the selection system and does not question the purpose of the method, a strategy which leads to high scores also on the reactions scale. However, whereas faking and moralistic bias take place in the context of self-assessment, the reactions scale focuses on reactions towards material issues such as methods and procedure chosen by other people.

Study III examined whether applicants' personality type is related to their reactions to the selection process. All three classic personality types – Resilient, Overcontrolled and Undercontrolled – were found, along with a new type, called Bohemian. The three types found in Study III show a considerable similarity compared to a review of the three classic types by Herzberg and Roth (2006) (see Study III, Honkaniemi et al., in press, Table 4). The only major differences were that Undercontrolled individuals in this study were more neurotic and less open than the average of this type.

The new type, Bohemian, was characterized in particular by low conscientiousness and by lower than average extroversion, especially dominance. The three classic personality types can be seen as a function of two dimensions: ego-resiliency and ego-control (Robins, et al., 1996). Ego-resiliency refers to the tendency to respond flexibly rather than rigidly, and ego-control refers to tendency to contain versus express emotional and motivational impulses (p. 159). It may be presumed that the new personality type would have rather high ego-resiliency, since the needs for cognitive structure, order and dominance are low. The ego-control, in turn, of the Bohemian type may be below average since his impulsivity is high. However, the Bohemian type's ego-control is not quite as low as the Undercontrolled type's ego-control, since the Bohemian's aggression and defendence are on the average level. Therefore the Bohemian type would be close to the Resilient type in resiliency, and close to the Undercontrolled type in ego-control. Asendorpf and van Aken (1999) have presented a cross-tabulation of levels of ego-resiliency and ego-control, and the personality types (Figure 3, p. 822). Three of the four cells are occupied by the three classic types, while the Bohemian type fits well into the empty cell of fairly low control and high resiliency.

The results of Study III showed that personality types were associated with applicant reactions. The Overcontrolled personality had the least favourable reactions to the selection process, and the Bohemian and Resilient types had the most favourable reactions. Personality type was related specifically to the fairness perceptions, but not to the face validity and or predictive validity perceptions. This accords with the earlier findings that persons with a Resilient personality profile are, for instance, less hostile and less aggressive than the other types (Grumm & von Colliani, 2009), less likely to perceive hostile intent in other people's actions, and less prone to aggressive reactions (Hart et al., 2005), whereas persons with an Overcontrolled personality profile have been found to have high generalized prejudice (Ekehammar & Akrami, 2003), a more conservative political orientation (Block & Block, 2006) and more dysfunctional coping (Vollrath & Torgersen, 2000).

According to the model about applicant reactions by Ryan and Ployhart (2000) the mechanism behind the variability of applicant reactions could be that different personalities find different aspects of selection procedures to be job relevant, and perceptions of job relevance in turn affect overall reactions. The current results do not support this, as the different personality types did not report different views on the job relevance of the process, but only on the fairness of the process.

The generalizability, or the extent to which these results can be applied to other settings, should be discussed. The context of this study was a process of selection to a vocational school. Although previous research has indeed used applicants to an educational institution as a sample and then generalized the results to the employment context (Ployhart & Ryan, 1997), it is important to discuss whether the findings would have been different had the selection been for a job vacancy. The first two experiments reported in this research investigated faking under highly motivating conditions. The applicants faced a real risk for not being selected. The pressure was further enhanced by the fact that only one other educational institution in Finland gives vocational training in this field, and it applies similar entrance examination procedures. This means that very few routes exist to receiving training in this occupational field. Therefore we can assume that the applicants were under at least as much pressure and were as motivated - also motivated to fake - as they would have been in a job selection context.

Another issue that needs to be discussed concerns the personality types found in this study. An individual's personality type seems to be very stable over time (Kinnunen et al., in press). Therefore, we may assume that an individual applicant would have represented the same personality type in a job selection context as he did in this vocational school application context. The distribution of the types in this study, however, cannot be generalized to other samples, as the same types do not emerge from all samples (Asendorpf, 2002). Nevertheless, the construction of the three classic types resembles the results of other studies (Herzberg & Roth, 2006), and therefore the results on the link between the three classic types and their reactions to the selection process can be generalized to other contexts.

The three criteria of person-oriented research (von Eye & Bogat, 2006) state that the research sample should be drawn from more than one population, the external validity of the groupings should be established, and the groups should be interpreted based on theory. The present participants were all applicants for entry to an educational program that would qualify them for one of three careers in the field of rescue work. Inside this field these three careers – fireman, emergency services dispatcher, and fire and rescue manager – make rather different demands. The first requires a high level of physical activity, the second involves organizing and effective communication, and the third requires leadership skills. Nevertheless, I cannot claim that the present applicants represented the general population. However, the three classic personality types were found very clearly and their external validity can be assumed. The

new Bohemian type was theoretically interpreted via the concepts of ego-resiliency and ego-control. In all, the three criteria were met reasonably well. Therefore I suggest that personality (type) should be included in the models of applicant reactions and taken into account in analyses studying the impact of external factors on applicant reactions.

4.1 Limitations

The three studies have also limitations that need to be taken into account before attempting to generalize the findings. First, in **Study I**, the groups (warned and un-warned) were not randomized. It would have been impossible to control the spread of the additional information (i.e. warning) if the respondents had been warned randomly during a single intake. Additionally, it was considered more ethical to keep the selection process standard across a single intake.

Second, the Study I was a between-subjects design. In other words, two different groups of different people were compared instead of comparing the same group in different settings, as in a within-subject design. The use of a between-subjects design has been criticized (e.g. Ellingson, Sackett & Connelly, 2007; McFarland & Ryan, 2000; Viswesvaran & Ones, 1999), as individual differences between the groups or differences in the surrounding circumstances may affect the results. In Study I, the demographics of the groups were somewhat different, and hence age, gender and career stream were controlled for. But, as the groups were not randomized, other differences between the warned and un-warned groups might well have existed. In fact, the mean levels of the personality dimensions were indeed different between those two groups, and this was interpreted as a consequence from of the warning and the concomitant reduction in faking. Nevertheless, the possibility remains that these differences originated in real differences in personality between the groups, and not in differences in faking.

Third, despite the fact that conditions of the examination days were kept very stable (e.g. the head interviewer was the same person; the tests were similar, if not exactly the same; the location was the same; and most of the tests and instructions were given to large groups simultaneously) the atmosphere during the assessment could have varied between the groups. The applicants participated in the exams in random sub-groups of five. These sub-groups stayed together for the whole assessment day. The atmosphere naturally varies from one sub-group to another, depending on the individuals who end up in the same sub-group by chance. This might have affected the results. For example, if several competitive individuals end up in the same sub-group, a bigger than usual increase in faking could result. Fourth, as all the respondents were from the same occupational field, the results cannot be directly generalized to all other professional segments.

Fifth, in **Study II,** the association found between applicants' reactions and faking does not provide evidence of a causal relationship, as the data were

cross-sectional. The possible causality might even be the other way around: perhaps those respondents, who have a high tendency to fake, also prettify the answers they give in the applicant reactions questionnaire – just in case this flattery might somehow benefit them in the selection process. Theoretical support about the causality can be found in, for example, Arvey's Test perceptions model (presented e.g. in Figure 1 in Ployhart & Harold, 2004), which proposes a causal relationship between test perceptions and test performance, but nevertheless a cross-sectional design cannot prove the causality of this relationship.

Sixth, the faking scale BIDR can be seen as a proxy of applicant faking. The faking scale was presented after the actual exam, as a voluntary survey. Therefore, what was actually measured, was faking on a faking scale, not faking in the particular examination situation. Therefore, even though faking scales seem to be valid measures of faking (Hough, et al., 1990; Marshall, de Fruyt, Rolland & Bagby, 2005; Rosse et al., 1998), and even though faking was not measured in totally neutral context (as the forms were identifiable, and administered immediately after the exam, by the same administrators, in the same location and atmosphere), a high score received on a faking scale after the exam is not a proof of high faking being present during the exam. Therefore, the data is only partially from a real-life selection context. It is plausible, however, that the faking scores would have been even higher, if collected during the examination, as high motivation increases faking (Birkeland, Manson, Kisamore, Brannick & Smith, 2006; Reid-Seiser & Fritzsche, 2001). But ideally, some other method to measure faking, for instance a acomparison between applicant and incumbent scores (e.g. Lönnqvist et al., 2007a), would have been a good addition.

Seventh, the voluntary nature of two of the measures (i.e. faking and reactions scales) in this research may have affected on who participated the Studies II and III. Due to ethical reasons, the examinees were told which measures are voluntary, i.e. not included in the selection test. The volunteer respondents may have been different compared to the non-respondents, for instance volunteer participants have been found to have different personality compared to non-volunteers (Lönnqvist, Paunonen, Verkasalo, Leikas, Tuulio-Henriksson and Lönnqvist, 2007b). Even though the response rate was high (74%), the generalizability of the results is limited, as we do not know how the non-respondents would have responded.

Eight, labelling personality types (**Study III)** is always controversial, since personality types do not precisely match the original types. For instance, in the current data the Undercontrolled type had the highest level of extraversion, not the Resilient type, as in most previous studies (overview in Herzberg & Roth, 2006).

Finally, all the measures were self-report. Although the present participants were warned against faking in the personality test, self-report data from a real-life selection context will still contain distortion or bias – a warning does not remove all bias from personality self-ratings (McFarland, 2003).

However, regardless of possible faking, personality tests seem to have enough criterion-validity even in personnel selection (Rothstein & Goffin, 2006).

4.2 Strengths

The studies included in this research also have several strengths. First, the studies were conducted in a real-life selection context, which improves the applicability of the results in practice. In the previous research, respondents have often only been instructed to fake or imagine they are applying for a desirable job. However, a hypothetical setting of this kind measures skill in faking more than the actual tendency to fake (Pauls & Crost, 2004), as faking usually takes place in real-world selection conditions (Birkeland et al., 2006; Reid-Seiser & Fritzsche, 2001). Second, in **Study I,** faking was studied by manipulation, i.e. a warning, not by an external instrument measuring the tendency to fake. Therefore the faking was presumably real. The study contributed more evidence to how fine-grained a phenomenon faking is (Birkeland et al., 2006; Christiansen et al., 1994; Smith & Ellingson, 2002). Faking is not spread evenly across all the sub-scales; it does not appear only on certain of the Big Five dimensions, or only on egoistic scales.

Third, **Study II** found a link between the real-life applicant reactions and faking, but the link was a negative one. The study demonstrated that improvement of fairness does not always lead to desired consequences. Improving applicant test reactions is usually recommended, as it has many positive outcomes (e.g. Gilliland, 1993), but it does not seem to help with the problem of faking.

Fourth, **Study III** demonstrated a relationship between personality types and applicant reactions. This means that applicant reactions are not completely determined by external factors. Fifth, in this study all the respondents were warned against faking. Warning decreases faking (Hough, 1998; Kluger & Colella, 1993), and hence the respondents' personality profiles were more accurate than they would have been without the warning. This means that the personality types found in Study III are based on more accurate personality profiles than in a normal self-assessment. Sixth, this study demonstrates the power of personality types in predicting outcomes. And finally, this study highlights the need for including personality in the applicant reaction models, and especially the necessity of controlling for the personality in research on the associations between external factors and reactions.

4.3 Practical implications

The results have some practical implications for a consultant (assessor) conducting a personnel assessment. First, a warning against faking can be

included in the standard instructions, as it seems to shift the inventory profiles in a more honest direction. However, after such alterations in the instructions, new comparative norm samples will need to be collected, as the distributions of the results will presumably change.

Second, faking is a very fine-grained phenomenon, and it does not occur identically on all sub-scales. Therefore, on the individual level, it is very difficult for the consultant to know which sub-scales have been faked and which have not. One cannot simply subtract the amount of faking measured by a faking scale from the score of every sub-scale. Hence, the assessor needs other information (such as interview and other tests) to conclude which personality dimensions are considered as relevant by the applicant in the job, i.e. what dimensions this individual is most likely to fake. A multi-method approach to selection is therefore recommended.

Third, even if faking seems to increase as a function of positive applicant reactions, this does not mean that applicants should henceforth be treated less fairly. Positive applicant reactions and high motivation have so many positive outcomes that they overrule the negative impact of faking. Nevertheless, it is important that the consultant is aware of the risk of faking, especially when interpreting the self-assessed personality profiles of very highly motivated applicants.

Fourth, the fact that applicants' reactions depend partly on their personality should be taken into account when, for instance, carrying out a customer satisfaction survey among previous applicants. It is important to gather a sample that includes respondents with different personalities in order to obtain a valid result from the survey. For instance, people with an Overcontrolled personality, who probably have the most critical opinions on the process, may be shy about expressing their views openly and they may prefer an anonymous written survey instead of a follow-up interview.

4.4 Conclusions

Several conclusions can be drawn from this research. First, a warning about the presence of a faking scale in a personality inventory changes the inventory results in less favourable (i.e. more honest) direction. Second, both moralistic and egoistic scales can be faked in a real-life selection context. Third, respondents do not fake evenly, but only on some sub-scales of a personality inventory. The faked sub-scales do not represent any particular theme or content. Fourth, applicant reactions are linked to impression management. Although improving applicant reactions is desirable in many ways, it also has a downside: it may enhance faking. Fifth, in future research, the impact of personality should be controlled for when studying the associations between e.g. external factors and applicant reactions in the selection context. And finally, personality has a role in applicant perception models as an antecedent of reactions.

YHTEENVETO

Yhteenveto: Hakijoiden persoonallisuustyypit, heidän reaktionsa arviointiprosessiin sekä vastausten kaunistelu henkilöarviointitilanteessa.

Sosiaalisesti suotava vastaaminen, eli kaunistelu, on yleistä henkilöarviointitilanteissa, kuten esimerkiksi työhönotossa tai oppilaitosvalinnoissa. Vielä ei kuitenkaan tiedetä tarkasti minkälaisia asioita hakijat yleensä kaunistelevat. Tämän tutkimuksen ensimmäinen osa selvitti kaunistelevatko ammattikouluun hakevat henkilöt valintakokeessa lähinnä ammatillista soveltuvuuttaan (egoistic bias) vai myös sosiaalista miellyttävyyttään (moralistic bias). Yleensä ihmiset kaunistelevat niitä asioita, joita pitävät keskeisinä juuri kyseisessä tilanteessa. Oletuksena oli, että opiskelu- ja työelämään liittyvässä arviointitilanteessa koetaan ammatillinen pätevyys keskeisenä ja kaunistelu keskittyy siten sen puolen korostamiseen.

Yksilöt kokevat arviointitilanteen eri tavoin: osa näkee menettelyt oikeudenmukaisempana kuin toiset. Yksilön kokemus arviointiprosessista vaikuttaa esimerkiksi siihen millaisena hakija näkee tulevan työnantajansa, työtehtävänsä tai omat mahdollisuutensa suoriutua tulevista haasteista. Tämän tutkimuksen toinen osa selvitti, kuinka hakijoiden kokemus oppilaitoksen henkilövalintatilanteesta vaikutti heidän halukkuuteensa kaunistella testivastauksiaan. Oletuksena oli, että jos hakijat kokevat arviointiprosessin reiluksi, he vastavuoroisesti kaunistelevat vähemmän.

Tiedetään, että monet ulkoiset tekijät (kuten käytetyt menetelmät ja valitsijoiden toiminta valintatilanteessa) vaikuttavat siihen, millaisena hakijat kokevat arviointitilanteen. Hakijoiden persoonallisuuden osuutta kokemuksen synnyssä ei tunneta. Tämän tutkimuksen kolmas osa selvitti, onko hakijan persoonallisuustyyppi yhteydessä siihen, kuinka oikeudenmukaisena hän kokee arviointitilanteen. Oletuksena oli, että persoonallisuus vaikuttaa tähän kokemukseen, sillä persoonallisuuden on todettu vaikuttavan monien muidenkin asenteiden tai kokemusten taustalla.

Tutkimusaineisto koostui 466 henkilöstä, jotka hakivat opiskelemaan pelastusalan oppilaitokseen. Kukin heistä haki yhdelle kolmesta koulutuslinjasta: pelastajaksi, hätäkeskuspäivystäjäksi tai palomestariksi. Hakijat kuvasivat persoonallisuuttaan PRF-kyselyn avulla ja täyttivät sitten kaksi kyselyä: yhden koskien vastausten kaunistelua ja yhden koskien kokemuksia arviointiprosessista. Puolta vastaajista oli varoitettu persoonallisuustestin yhteydessä, että tuloksista näkee, ovatko he yrittäneet kaunistella vastauksiaan. Oletuksena oli, että varoitus vähentää kaunistelua.

Tulokset osoittivat ensinnäkin, että hakijat kaunistelivat arviointitilanteessa sekä ammatillista pätevyyttään että sosiaalista miellyttävyyttään. Vastaajat, joita ei ollut varoitettu, esiintyivät suoriutumisenhaluisempina ja itsenäisempinä (pätevyys) sekä sopuisampina ja huolehtivampina (miellyttävyys) kuin vastaajat, joita oli varoitettu kaunistelemasta. Näyttää siltä, että arviointitilanteessa

pidetään myös sosiaalisia taitoja tärkeinä ja kaunistelun arvoisina, ei ainoastaan ammatilliseen pätevyyteen liittyviä asioita.

Lisäksi tulokset osoittivat, että mitä myönteisemmin ehdokkaat kokivat arviointitilanteen, sitä enemmän he tietoisesti kaunistelivat vastauksiaan. Päteviltä ja oikeudenmukaisilta vaikuttaneet testit mahdollisesti lisäsivät suoriutumismotivaatiota ja sitä kautta kaunistelua.

Aineistosta etsittiin erilaisia persoonallisuustyyppejä eli useamman piirteen yhdistelmiä. Niitä löytyi neljä:

- Joustava tyyppi (Resilient, 45% aineistosta), joka on tunnollinen, tasapainoinen, ulospäin suuntautunut ja ystävällinen.
- Ylikontrolloitu tyyppi (Overcontrolled, 13% aineistosta), joka on hermoileva, sisäänpäin kääntynyt ja etäinen suhteessa muihin ihmisiin.
- Alikontrolloitu tyyppi (Undercontrolled, 10%), joka on hermoileva, ulospäin suuntautunut, impulsiivinen ja huolimaton.
- Uusi tyyppi boheemi (Bohemian, 32%), jota kuvaa huolettomuus. Hän ei ole kiinnostunut muiden johtamisesta, on kunnianhimoton ja karttaa rakenteita.

Tulokset osoittivat, että oppilaitokseen hakevien ehdokkaiden persoonallisuustyyppi oli yhteydessä siihen millaisina he arviointitilanteen kokivat. Hakijat, joilla oli ylikontrolloitu persoonallisuustyyppi, kokivat tilanteen kaikkein kielteisimmin. Ehdokkaat, joilla oli joustava tai boheemi persoonallisuustyyppi, kokivat arviointitilanteen myönteisesti.

Yhteenvetona tuloksista voidaan sanoa, että arviointitilanteessa hakijat eivät esitä olevansa ainoastaan ammatin kannalta sopivia henkilöitä, vaan myös mukavia ihmisiä. Hakijat eivät kaunistele vastauksiaan tasaisesti kautta linjan, vaan valikoivin osin. Tietoinen vastausten kaunistelu on suurempaa henkilöillä, jotka kokevat arviointitilanteen mielekkääksi. Lisäksi persoonallisuus näyttää olevan yhteydessä siihen, millaisena arviointitilanne koetaan. Tämän vuoksi persoonallisuus on syytä ottaa mukaan kontrolloitavaksi muuttujaksi tutkimuksissa, joissa selvitetään ulkoisten olosuhteiden ja hakijoiden kokemusten välistä yhteyttä.

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