

## Chapter 2 How Is Personality Studied and Assessed?

MULTIPLE CHOICE. Choose the one alternative that best completes the statement or answers the question.

1) Reliability refers to

- A) the ability of a scale to condense information.
- B) the ability of a scale to measure what it is supposed to.
- C) the ready availability of a scale.
- D) the ability of a scale to give consistent results.
- E) none of these

Answer: D

Diff: 1

Type: MC

Page Ref: 25

2) Random variation in measurement is termed

- A) reliability.
- B) bias.
- C) validity.
- D) error of randomness.
- E) error variance.

Answer: E

Diff: 1

Type: MC

Page Ref: 25

3) A reliable personality test should have

- A) construct validity.
- B) internal consistency reliability.
- C) a very small number of items.
- D) items that are hard to understand, to keep the attention of the test takers.
- E) no reverse-coded items, since these confuse the scoring.

Answer: B

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 25–27

4) A useful way way to address the “problem” that personalities tend to change to some degree over time is

- A) not to measure personality until adulthood, when personality is more “set.”
- B) not to measure personality at all.
- C) to look for consistent patterns of response which indicate underlying personality stability.
- D) to measure personality only once per person.
- E) to assume that any change represents error of measurement.

Answer: C

Diff: 3

Type: MC

Page Ref: 27

5) Validity refers to

- A) whether a test measures what it is supposed to.
- B) whether the number of items on a scale is too large.
- C) whether obtained results are reliable over time.
- D) the degree of strength of the effects found.
- E) the extent to which the test was administered to the correct sample of people.

Answer: A

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 29

6) Discriminant validity is established when a test

- A) yields similar results over time and situation.
- B) does not correlate with measures of unrelated constructs.
- C) correlates with theoretically related constructs.
- D) has items that correlate highly with one another.
- E) has items that do not correlate with one another.

Answer: B

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 29

7) Suppose you complete a personality questionnaire where scores usually range from 1-35, and you receive a score of “10.” Suppose you then take the test again the next day and receive a score of “9.5.” This questionnaire appears to have

- A) internal validity.
- B) next day reliability.
- C) discriminant validity.
- D) external validity.
- E) test-retest reliability.

Answer: E

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 27

- 8) When choosing items to include in a personality test, one wants items that
- A) correlate with other items in the scale.
  - B) are normally distributed.
  - C) can discriminate between individuals with varying levels of the trait.
  - D) get different responses from different individuals.
  - E) all of these

Answer: E

Diff: 3

Type: MC

Page Ref: 30

- 9) In tests that are to be widely employed, the coefficient of internal consistency reliability generally should be about

- A) .25.
- B) .80.
- C) 2.00.
- D) -.10.
- E) .00.

Answer: B

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 27

- 10) Wording of items is sometimes reversed to

- A) avoid reversal errors.
- B) keep participants from becoming bored.
- C) save space on a questionnaire.
- D) determine whether those scoring the test are paying attention.
- E) avoid the acquiescence response-set bias.

Answer: E

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 31

- 11) Biases in testing may include

- A) ethnic bias.
- B) religious bias.
- C) political bias.
- D) socioeconomic bias.
- E) all of these

Answer: A

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 31–33

12) The most common type of personality test is

- A) self-report.
- B) peer-rating.
- C) projective test.
- D) structured interview.
- E) behavioral observation.

Answer: A

Diff: 1

Type: MC

Page Ref: 34

13) Criterion-related item selection refers to

- A) selection of theoretically relevant items.
- B) selection of items that predict to outcome criteria.
- C) selection of items that are most often endorsed.
- D) selection of items that use the same words as the concept definition.
- E) selection of items that meet the criterion that 80% of participants give the same response.

Answer: B

Diff: 3

Type: MC

Page Ref: 29

14) Which of the following directly measures psychopathology?

- A) the Q-sort test
- B) Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory
- C) NEO Personality Inventory
- D) the Thematic Apperception Test
- E) the Draw-a-Person test

Answer: B

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 34

15) Biological factors which may be related to personality are

- A) belly button type.
- B) blood type.
- C) skull shape.
- D) levels of mercury or lead in the body.
- E) eye movements.

Answer: D

Diff: 3

Type: MC

Page Ref: 40

16) Which of the following are methods of assessing behavior?

- A) having people wear beepers and write down what they are doing when they are paged
- B) counting how many times a person smiles in the grocery check-out line
- C) sitting outside a theater and watching to see when people open doors for one another
- D) asking people what they typically do after dinner
- E) all of these

Answer: E

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 41-43

17) Because it may be difficult to assess the validity of a psychotherapeutic interview, which of the following is often used as the measure of validity?

- A) the interview's correlation with the person's self-report of the problem
- B) the amount of eye contact in the interview
- C) the number of words the person uses when being interviewed
- D) whether or not the person comes to the interview on time
- E) the results of the therapeutic treatment

Answer: E

Diff: 1

Type: MC

Page Ref: 42

18) "Heidi is aggressive and extroverted." This statement describes Heidi in terms of

- A) types.
- B) traits.
- C) both types and traits.
- D) neither types nor traits.
- E) motives.

Answer: B

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 43

19) One problem with using observable expressive behaviors as a method of personality assessment is that

- A) there is little variability in expressive style.
- B) most expressive behaviors are not observable.
- C) expressive style is often strongly influenced by cultural and social norms.
- D) it is extremely easy to control expressive behaviors.
- E) none of these

Answer: C

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 44

20) If you were told that a child was taking a personality test and saw the child drawing a picture, the most likely conclusion would be that

- A) the child is distracted from his/her task, and so is unreliable.
- B) the child is completing a peer assessment.
- C) the child is taking an expressiveness test.
- D) the child is taking a projective test.
- E) the child is being “warmed up” for the personality test (by taking a pre-test).

Answer: D

Diff: 1

Type: MC

Page Ref: 47–48

21) Projective tests do NOT include

- A) sentence completion tests.
- B) draw-a-person test.
- C) Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory.
- D) word association tests.
- E) inkblot tests.

Answer: C

Diff: 1

Type: MC

Page Ref: 47–49

22) Projective tests are different from other measures of personality in that they tend to be

- A) more objective.
- B) more subjective.
- C) more accurate.
- D) much shorter.
- E) much longer.

Answer: B

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 47–49

23) If an assessment is not related to what it should not be related to, this is

- A) temporal stability.
- B) discriminant validity.
- C) premature libido.
- D) very bad for validity.
- E) convergent validity.

Answer: B

Diff: 1

Type: MC

Page Ref: 29

24) The Affective Communication Test (or ACT) measures

- A) motivation to falsify.
- B) personal charisma.
- C) leaking of libido.
- D) A Comprehensive Testing of motivation.
- E) high school achievement.

Answer: B

Diff: 1

Type: MC

Page Ref: 25

25) Test-retest reliability refers to

- A) the success of a test in measuring the intended concept.
- B) the ability to concentrate.
- C) temporal stability of a measure.
- D) things that repeat, like talkativeness.
- E) patterns of change.

Answer: C

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 27

26) Demographics include variables such as \_\_\_\_\_ and are useful in helping us to understand people's behaviors and personalities.

- A) the ability to concentrate
- B) motivation to succeed
- C) level of extroversion
- D) age and religion
- E) talkativeness

Answer: D

Diff: 1

Type: MC

Page Ref: 50

27) When a person is given a stack of cards naming various characteristics and asked to sort them into piles on a dimension such as "least characteristic" to "most characteristic" of oneself, this is termed a

- A) P-sort.
- B) Q-sort.
- C) sport sort.
- D) C-sort.
- E) sore sport.

Answer: B

Diff: 1

Type: MC

Page Ref: 36

28) The promising technique that can show brain activity by recording the brain's use of radioactive glucose is called

- A) electron CAT.
- B) EEG.
- C) positron emission tomography (PET).
- D) C-sort.
- E) galvanic skin response.

Answer: C

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 39

29) The usefulness of projective measurement techniques derives from

- A) their use of a multiple-choice format.
- B) the use of an objective scoring system.
- C) item response theory.
- D) their simple and reliable scoring methods.
- E) none of these

Answer: E

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 47–49

30) Which personality perspective is most closely associated with the use of projective testing approaches?

- A) trait
- B) interactionist
- C) biological
- D) psychoanalytic
- E) behaviorist

Answer: D

Diff: 1

Type: MC

Page Ref: 47

31) An important difference between projective techniques and self-report measures is the much greater reliance of the self-report measures on

- A) the willingness of the examinee to disclose personal information overtly.
- B) a standardized set of testing materials.
- C) the interpretation skills of the examiner.
- D) a trusting relationship between the examiner and the test-taker.
- E) a standard procedure for administering the test.

Answer: A

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 34–36, 48–49



- 32) An “acquiescence response set” refers to the tendency of people filling out questionnaires to
- A) agree to fill out questionnaires even when they would prefer not to.
  - B) select the answer option that they think makes the best impression.
  - C) have a bias toward saying “yes” or “agree” to questions.
  - D) have a bias to select the last answer option.
  - E) select the answer option that they think the examiner expects.

Answer: C

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 31

- 33) Which of the following approaches to the construction of a self-report test will eliminate or reduce the effect of the social desirability response set?

- A) including many items that will be reverse coded
- B) including items that have response options that are equal in social desirability
- C) including items that boost the self esteem of the examinee
- D) including an assurance that the scores will be kept confidential
- E) including a large number of items

Answer: B

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 31

- 34) A case study usually entails

- A) computer-based responses.
- B) an assessment of a person’s luggage.
- C) one psychologist’s research.
- D) a brief survey.
- E) an in-depth assessment.

Answer: E

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 53

- 35) The use of multiple methods to assess an individual’s personality

- A) is considered to be a confound in research.
- B) represents a conflict of interest for the researcher.
- C) shows that the researcher does not understand good research methodology.
- D) generates unusable data.
- E) allows the limitations of any single method to be minimized.

Answer: E

Diff: 3

Type: MC

Page Ref: 51–52

36) If a researcher is interested in determining the degree of association between intelligence and grades in school, then the most appropriate research method to use is

- A) a correlational design.
- B) an experiment.
- C) a case study.
- D) a Q-sort.
- E) all of the above

Answer: A

Diff: 1

Type: MC

Page Ref: 53

37) A correlational design can be useful because it helps to determine

- A) the effect one variable has on another.
- B) a lot of information about an individual.
- C) the role of one variable in the development of another.
- D) the strength of the relationship between two variables.
- E) causal influences.

Answer: D

Diff: 1

Type: MC

Page Ref: 53

38) If there is a strong positive correlation between people's rated level of charisma and their scores on the Affective Communication test, we can deduce

- A) that charisma is strongly determined by genetic influences.
- B) that people who are motivated to succeed deliberately train themselves to be more expressive.
- C) that telling people to use more gestures would make them more charismatic.
- D) that extroversion underlies successful leadership.
- E) none of these

Answer: E

Diff: 3

Type: MC

Page Ref: 53

39) An experiment is

- A) the only research design that allows for causal inferences.
- B) always carried out in a laboratory setting.
- C) never used in "real" psychological research.
- D) commonly used in case-study designs
- E) the same thing as a quasi-experiment.

Answer: A

Diff: 1

Type: MC

Page Ref: 55

40) The Thematic Apperception Test, or TAT, was developed by

- A) Charles Darwin.
- B) Karen Horney.
- C) Sigmund Freud.
- D) Erik Erikson.
- E) Henry Murray and Christiana Morgan.

Answer: E

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 28

41) In an experiment, a \_\_\_\_\_ group is a comparison group that does not receive the treatment administered to the \_\_\_\_\_ group.

- A) manipulated; treatment
- B) control; treatment
- C) placebo; control
- D) treatment; placebo
- E) control; placebo

Answer: B

Diff: 1

Type: MC

Page Ref: 55

42) Which of the following could NOT be completed by a participant's mother as an other-report assessment?

- A) a demographic assessment
- B) a questionnaire
- C) a Q-sort
- D) an interview
- E) a projective test

Answer: E

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 49

43) Alfred Kinsey's research on human sexual behaviors addressed many private issues with participants through the use of

- A) behavioral observations.
- B) videotaping interactions.
- C) interviews.
- D) Q-sorts.
- E) other-ratings.

Answer: C

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 42–43

44) What is one methodological concern that arises in the scientific study of personality?

- A) All data are subjective.
- B) All data are objective.
- C) Some data are subjective, and thus hard to measure.
- D) Some data are objective, and thus hard to measure.
- E) Measuring personality is a perfected science.

Answer: C

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 24

45) Why is reliability in measurement instruments important in the study of personality?

- A) Low reliability shows that there is limited precision in a measure.
- B) Without good reliability it is impossible to achieve validity.
- C) Low reliability would not allow the researcher to draw inferences.
- D) Unreliable measures can give misleading results.
- E) All of these

Answer: D

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 25

46) Which of the following is a type of reliability that can be measured?

- A) Construct reliability
- B) Internal consistency reliability
- C) Discriminant validity
- D) Convergent reliability
- E) Criterion-related validation

Answer: B

Diff: 3

Type: MC

Page Ref: 25

47) Which of the following statements best describes the nature of construct validity?

- A) The extent to which a test truly measures a theoretical construct
- B) The extent to which an assessment is not related to what it should theoretically not be related to
- C) The extent to which the assessment is related to what it should theoretically be related to
- D) The extent to which the assessment is able to remain reliable over time and across populations
- E) The extent to which the test can predict another outcome related to what the test is measuring

Answer: A

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 29

48) Which of the following is considered a potential source of bias that could lead to misleading results?

- A) Discriminant validation
- B) Self report tests
- C) Barnum effect
- D) High reliability
- E) Response sets

Answer: E

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 31

49) Which of the following statements best describes a social desirability response set?

- A) A bias to pick the response option of “yes” or “agree” or “very true of me”
- B) A bias to pick response options that make the respondent appear eccentric or unusual
- C) A bias to pick responses randomly
- D) A bias to pick responses that the respondent believes are expected by society
- E) A bias to pick responses that make the respondent appear high in sexual desire

Answer: D

Diff: 1

Type: MC

Page Ref: 31

50) What is one reasonable criticism of projective personality tests?

- A) They are highly subjective and have problems with reliability and validity
- B) They are highly objective and have problems with reliability and validity
- C) They are highly subjective but have good reliability and validity
- D) They are highly objective but have problems with reliability
- E) They are excessively reliable

Answer: A

Diff: 1

Type: MC

Page Ref: 49

51) Which of the following is a significant disadvantage of interviews?

- A) They rely on information from the participant’s unconscious
- B) They produce data that is highly projective
- C) They are subject to bias by the behaviors of the interviewer
- D) They are generally unstructured and tend to meander
- E) A tester can test only one participant at a time

Answer: C

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 43

52) Which of the following is an example of a questionnaire self-report measure?

- A) PET scan
- B) Interviews
- C) Q-sorts
- D) Rorschach measure
- E) MMPI

Answer: E

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 34

53) Which of the following is NOT a biological measure?

- A) PET
- B) MRI
- C) Rorschach
- D) EEG
- E) fMRI

Answer: C

Diff: 1

Type: MC

Page Ref: 35

54) What is a limitation of the demographic and lifestyle method?

- A) Can tell little about the individual person
- B) Can contain a vast array of information
- C) Can compile a large amount of data
- D) Can be biased
- E) There are no limitations in the demographic and lifestyle methodology

Answer: A

Diff: 1

Type: MC

Page Ref: 50

55) What is a definition of a case study?

- A) A study in which there is a clear manipulation of an independent variable
- B) A study in which information is gathered about one individual
- C) A study in which non-human primates are used
- D) A study in which many participants are followed for the majority of their lives
- E) A study in which the dependent variable is measured over a large population

Answer: B

Diff: 1

Type: MC

Page Ref: 53

56) What is a major limitation of correlational studies?

- A) They cannot measure relationships among variables
- B) They cannot measure the degree to which a relationship exists between variables
- C) They cannot show the direction of a relationship between variables
- D) They cannot provide information about causal relationships among variables
- E) The correlational method has no limits

Answer: D

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 53

57) What is the greatest strength of experimental designs that other designs lack?

- A) Experimental designs have the ability to show cause-and-effect relationships
- B) Experimental designs have the ability to prove effects beyond a doubt
- C) Experimental designs have the ability to measure multiple variables
- D) Experimental designs have the ability to show relationships among variables
- E) Experimental designs allow intensive investigation of one individual person

Answer: A

Diff: 2

Type: MC

Page Ref: 55

58) Which of the following is an example of a projective test?

- A) MMPI
- B) MRI
- C) fMRI
- D) Case studies
- E) TAT

Answer: E

Diff: 1

Type: MC

Page Ref: 49

SHORT ANSWER. Write the word or phrase that best completes each statement or answers the question.

59) Measurement that relies on interpretations is called \_\_\_\_\_ assessment, whereas \_\_\_\_\_ assessment is not dependent on the individual making the assessment.

Answer: subjective; objective

Diff: 1

Type: SA

Page Ref: 24

60) \_\_\_\_\_ refers to the consistency of scores that are expected to be the same.

Answer: Reliability

Diff: 1

Type: SA

Page Ref: 25

61) \_\_\_\_\_ is the extent to which a test truly measures the intended theoretical construct.

Answer: Validity

Diff: 1

Type: SA

Page Ref: 29

62) Acquiescence and social desirability \_\_\_\_\_ are biases that are unrelated to the characteristics being measured.

Answer: response sets

Diff: 1

Type: SA

Page Ref: 31

63) Tests that fail to take into account the relevant culture of the person being tested display a(n) \_\_\_\_\_.

Answer: ethnic bias

Diff: 2

Type: SA

Page Ref: 31–33

64) The Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) is an example of a(n) \_\_\_\_\_-report test.

Answer: self

Diff: 1

Type: SA

Page Ref: 34

65) The \_\_\_\_\_ test is a method of personality assessment in which a person is given a stack of cards naming various characteristics and is asked to sort them into piles according to the degree to which they characterize himself or herself.

Answer: Q-Sort

Diff: 1

Type: SA

Page Ref: 36



66) The 1921 Lewis Terman's study of 1,500 young boys and girls, in which parents were asked to rate their children, showed that \_\_\_\_\_ by others could be reliable.

Answer: ratings

Diff: 2

Type: SA

Page Ref: 37

67) Assessing personality through human hormone level or the nervous system is a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ measure of personality.

Answer: biological

Diff: 2

Type: SA

Page Ref: 39–41

68) \_\_\_\_\_ is a methodology that can help to determine relations between our behaviors and personalities.

Answer: Behavioral observation

Diff: 2

Type: SA

Page Ref: 41

69) The classic \_\_\_\_\_ in psychology is psychotherapeutic, where the client talks about important or troubling parts of his or her life.

Answer: interview

Diff: 1

Type: SA

Page Ref: 41

70) One of the best-studied \_\_\_\_\_ is the one used to assess the Type A behavior pattern, which has the interviewer ask a series of challenging questions.

Answer: structured interviews

Diff: 2

Type: SA

Page Ref: 43

71) Measurement of \_\_\_\_\_ such as loudness and rate of speech, posture, and gesturing, can be used in personality assessment.

Answer: expressive behaviors

Diff: 2

Type: SA

Page Ref: 43–44

72) \_\_\_\_\_, which uses diaries and other personal records, is a rich source of information about personality.

Answer: Document analysis

Diff: 2

Type: SA

Page Ref: 45–46

73) A \_\_\_\_\_ test is an assessment technique that studies personality through use of a relatively unstructured stimulus, task, or situation such as the “draw-a-person” task.

Answer: projective

Diff: 2

Type: SA

Page Ref: 47–49

74) \_\_\_\_\_ information such as age and gender are not psychological, but can still provide vital insights about an individual.

Answer: Demographic

Diff: 2

Type: SA

Page Ref: 50

75) A new measure has been developed to assess personality, but women always score lower on this measure than men do. It is possible that this test has a bias called a(n) \_\_\_\_\_.

Answer: gender bias

Diff: 2

Type: SA

Page Ref: 33

76) Personality measures including the MMPI, NEO-PI, and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator are all tests that use a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ method.

Answer: self-report

Diff: 1

Type: SA

Page Ref: 35

ESSAY. Write your answer in the space provided or on a separate sheet of paper.

77) What are the strengths and weaknesses of an objective approach to personality assessment, and how are they different from those of a subjective approach?

78) What is the difference between reliability and validity? Describe two ways of assessing reliability. Describe two ways of assessing validity.

79) Why do we want scale items to correlate with one another? And why should they not be too highly correlated?

80) Why would you want to word some questions on a test in the direction of the trait you are measuring (positively) and some in the opposite direction (negatively)?

81) What's the difference between an interview and a structured interview? What might be the advantages and disadvantages of each?

82) Briefly, what is the distinction between types and traits?

83) What is the difference between a correlational and an experimental design? What are the strengths and weaknesses of each?

84) Design a study to assess your roommate's personality. Describe the measures you plan to use and why you have selected these particular measures. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of your study.