E-411 PRMA

LECTURE 21 ASSESSMENTS IN BUSINESS AND CAREERS

Christopher David Desjardins

HOW COULD WE USE TESTS IN BUSINESS AND CAREERS?

CAREER INTEREST AND CHOICE

We may want to gauge someone's propensity towards a career

Want to quantify their interest relative to professionals

assumption - if your interest are similar to someone in the field than you would be interested in that field

STRONG INTEREST INVENTORY

How would you create such an instrument?

Write and select a bunch of diverse items meant to distinguish between people in different fields

Administer this exhaustive instrument to people from various fields that you want to be able to talk about it

Keep only the items that have high discriminative validity

Administer the test to job seekers that told them which careers match their interest given their response pattern

Would want to make sure the instrument was tailored to your population (e.g. their education level, age, whether they want a nonprofessional career, disabilities, etc)

HOW COULD WE ASSESS THE VALIDITY OF SUCH AN INVENTORY?

DOES INTEREST EQUAL APTITUDE?

WHICH IS MORE IMPORTANT TO CAREER SUCCESS: APTITUDE OR INTEREST?

APTITUDE TESTS

- These may be traditional paper and pencil, on a computer, or involve demonstrating dexterity
- Could measure mathematical skill, abstract thought, spatial skills, use of certain tools, motor skills, etc
- The General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB), most widely utilized aptitude test
- Original used cutoffs and validity studies
- Uses regression and validity generalization to make recommendations based on test results
- Hunter developed 5 families of jobs and used regression to within a family to make recommendations

GATB

validity generalization implies that the same GATB score could be predictive of aptitude a cluster of jobs

strong overlap and high homogeneity in a cluster

For example, need to only test if you have the aptitude to be a counseling psychologist to find out that clinicial psychology could work for you

GATB consists of 9 aptitudes: verbal, numerical, spatial, form perception, clerical perception, motor coordination, finger dexterity, and manual dexterity

These abilities are then composited to create three scales, which are used to predict job proficiency

THE DOWNSIDE, GATB HAS TRADITIONALLY USED RACE NORMING

WHAT COULD BE THE ROLE OF PERSONALITY ASSESSMENT?

PERSONALITY TRAITS

- Employers may wish to administer a personality assessment to see if prospective employees fits within the business
- What might be the problem with this?
- May wish to administer an integrity test
- Perhaps the most valid test is the one with the least amount of face validity?

PERSONALITY TYPES

Meyers-Briggs has been employed a lot!

Based on Jung work, items measure your "preferences" (e.g. Extraversion or Interversion) and from your preferences come your personality type

Psychometric soundness is debatable

The link between personality is not clear and depends on definition of work performance

However, high conscientiousness and extroversion and low neuroticism generally correlated with high work performance

TRANSITION ASSESSMENTS

- Transition from school to work
  - Students writing assessments for careers they are interested in
- Career transition
- Retirement transition

MORE USES IN BUSINESS

- Can be used to screen candidates relatively to some criteria
- Can select candidates for a position
- Could be used to classify candidates in categories
- Could be used to place candidates in programs, tracts, etc
- Could use interest, aptitude, ability, or personality tests to do any of these

ASSESSMENT WHEN APPLYING FOR A JOB

What do employers' use to screen and select perspective candidates?

- Resume
- Cover letter
- Application
- Letters of recommendation
- Interviews
- Portfolios
- A performance test?

MEASURES OF COGNITIVE ABILITY

Cognitive ability tests often used in selection and placement

Tend to be good predictors of future performance

Present methods often reinforce cultural stereotypes

Computerized tests that minimize verbal content may prove fruitful

PRODUCTIVITY

Tests and tasks are also used for measuring productivity

Often involve comparing individuals to one another

Could create forced dichotomous that are real or unreal

May be measured by supervisor or peers

Could be measured individually or as a part of a team

MOTIVATION

- We are often interested in
  - Motivates someone to excel at work
  - Motivates someone to apply for a job
  - Motivates someone to stay at a job
  - Is someone intrinsically motivated?
  - Is someone extrinsically motivated?
  - Basically we are interested in factors related to motivation in a career
- Several models of motivation
  - Could be a hierarchical or tiered system
- Ultimately, want to avoid burnout

ATTITUDES AT WORK

Is an employee satisfied with their job

Do they feel a sense of commitment to the company

Is there a strong sense of organizational culture

Why might we have interest in these attitudes?

People that are satisfied at work, do a better job

If they are committed to your organization, they will likely stick around and do better

Foster an Apple or Google culture

IMPLICIT ATTITUDES

These are your gut feelings about something

They are not conscious and automatic

What could be the benefit of measuring implicit attitudes in business?

Underlying theoretical framework, physiological correlates of the measures, and whether they are truly not conscious reactions present measurement issues

SURVEYS

- Surveys are commonly employed to measure attitudes and are delivered by an assortment of media
- Can get a lot from a little
- However, potential major issues?
  - How can you be sure you measure the person that you are trying to measure?
  - How do you ensure a representative sample?
  - What does non-response imply?
- Tailored Design Method could be considered to placate these issues

QUALITATIVE METHODS

include focus groups, think alouds, behavior observations, and other methods that do not seek to assign numbers

Great for getting in depth information about something that otherwise would be impossible

Great during the piloting, product development, etc

Expensive, time consuming, validity and reliability don't really exist here

Are these people representative?