Research Project 3

by Anna Carty

**Grade: 75 (late submission -5; didn’t cite research; results reports inaccurate; sample information incomplete)**

**Group Members**:

Sofia Dumalo

Chaewon Park

Lolita Gomeli

TA: Luyao Zhang WF 9:00

For our research we decided to do a study of fifty individuals between the four of our group members and observe the how they viewed themselves versus how others ( our four group members) each viewed them, and compare the differences in answers given. In order to observe this we began with creating a survey based around the big five personality traits, extraversion, conscientiousness, openness, agreeableness, and neuroticism, along with one more, emotional intelligence. We modeled fifteen questions after each of these traits and then proceeded to code them and put them into survey format. Two separate surveys were created, one for the participants and one for the researchers. We then had each of the participants take the survey. In addition each researcher briefly went through the pages of the fifty participants and took the same survey with their initial thoughts on the personality of the participant. After a period we submitted the data and analyzed it for differences in how the participants saw themselves and how their Facebook pages made them look to strangers.

Our research question was based around the differences in how the participants saw themselves in terms of the big five personality traits and the disconnect between how others saw them. We wanted to really see if people had some sort of disconnect between how they saw themselves and how they actually appeared to other people. This would more likely be more properly measured if we had known these people in real life for a period of time, but that would have been unrealistic as all four researchers had to rate the participants so simply briefly going through their Facebook pages was our best bet.

Theres a lot of research that proves that there is a large difference in how people perceive their personalities and how others actually see them. Individuals constantly want to find some hint of what their really personality is like which is why there are so many survey like tests in order to confirm their beliefs such as the Big Five Personality Tests or the Meyer- Briggs Personality Test. Of course these are difficult in terms of being truly accurate because there is a lot of confirmation bias in regards to oneself. One might think that they are not an anxious person whatsoever but most of their friends and family would highly categorize them as an anxious person and thus their results could be inaccurate. This could possibly be a reason behind as to why there is little correlation between the answers of the participants and the answers of the researchers.

It is also widely known that many people put a lot of time and effort into how they appear via social media. Only the best possible pictures of themselves can be put up or the links they share could be meant to try and make them look a certain way. Due to the fact that social media ( especially Facebook ) can be so screened, the person people are looking at one social media could be completely different as to who they actually are in real life. It s very easy to only select pictures and statuses that make you seem like a very social person when in reality you could be very extraverted and just want people to see you that way. When the participants are answering the survey they would most likely answer in accordance to how they view their actual self while the researchers are responding based on their Facebook identity causing a mismatch in the data analyzed.

Our research could prove one of the above two theories in terms of confirming that there is either a disconnect in how an individual sees themselves and how others see them, or that Facebook pages are so heavily edited that who they are on social media is a very different person in real life. Or if the data shows high correlation with the researchers answers and the participants answers then it could prove that people are actually very in tune with themselves and their personality is very static in regards to how they see themselves and how others see them.

Our project intends to measure these correlations via the survey given to the participants and the replicate survey given to the researchers. We try to eliminate and type of bias by only having the researchers who are not familiar with the participant to rate them via the survey. In order to get as accurate results as possible we used three separate researchers to rate each participant to ensure we had as much data as possible to work with in terms of coming to a solid consensus on the views of the participants.

Materials used to assess the research were primarily the surveys we had created. As stated before we based the fifteen questions around the big five personality traits and then one of our group members coded the questions formatted into the survey. The survey’s used for both researchers and participants were nearly the exact same aside from the questions being erased differently in regards to “I” and “They”. Researchers were also required to input their name at the top and the ID number of the participant while participants simply had to input their ID number. We used a spread sheet and color coding to keep track of which participants had filled out and completed the survey, their ID numbers, and which of us had finished rating each of the participants via color coordination. Our primary method of viewing and recruiting each of the participants was through Facebook. Everyone had at least one mutual friend since all the researchers were friends on Facebook for most of the participants we were able to see a decent amount of information in order to get as accurate as a response on the surveys. Since all of our research members were either Juniors or Seniors in University the typical age range for each of the participants tended to be around 9-22 with the occasional parent thrown in. Interestingly enough in regards to gender there was also a decent mix of the two with no large differences showing up in the number of males or females recruited.

As stated as before the results of our data showed a difference or a disconnect between the raters and the participants in terms of how they saw themselves and versus how we saw them. Regarding reliability for the within- self reports Cronbach- Alpha Reports came back for Openness with correlation of .613, Conscientiousness with a correlation of .652, Extraversion with a correction of .535, Agreeableness with a correlation of .739, Neuroticism with a correlation of -.061, and Emotional Intelligence with a correlation of .206. The results were slightly different for the within- other reports for reliability with Openness showing .621, Extraversion showing .813, Conscientiousness showing .842, Agreeableness showing .675, Neuroticism showing .488, and Emotional Intelligence showing .331. Correlations between the self others actually showed to have a fairly large difference when it came to the personality trait we were measuring. I was actually a little surprised to see some of the result that came up. For between self-other regarding our six personality traits the correlations were as follows. Openness had a correction of .337, Conscientiousness had a correlation of .355, Extraversion had a correction of .154, Agreeableness had a correction of .057, Neuroticism had a correction -.072, and Emotional Intelligence had a correlation of .213. The average absolute difference for the traits come up as .605 for Openness, .593 for Conscientiousness, .751 for Extraversion, .569 for Agreeableness, .716 for Neuroticism, and .413 for Emotional Intelligence. There were four other tables also included in the data that showed corrections between the big five personality traits in regards to Self and Others.

At the start of our project what we wanted to find out was the correlations between how people saw themselves personality wise and how others saw them through their social media. In order to test this we decided to design a survey for the participants chosen to take. The fifteen questions administered on the survey were based on the big five personality traits along with one trait out our own, emotional intelligence added for a total of six traits for the participants to rate themselves on. After having answered the survey the three researcher who were to familiar with the participant took the same survey after having briefly scrolled through the Facebook page of the participant and answered according to what they thought the participants personality was like based off of what they had briefly seen on the page. The results returned showed correlations between what the participants had said about themselves and what the researcher had assumed of the participants personal traits based off of their Facebook pages.

In regards of reliability within the self the higher reliability seemed to be found within Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness in that particular order and the lowest correlation coming from Extraversion, Neuroticism, and the lowest reliability n coming from Emotional intelligence with the number being negative. In terms of reliability with other ( meaning the researchers) it actually seemed to surprisingly follow the same trend as it did with the self with agreeableness, conscientiousness, and extraversion showing more reliability while openness and neuroticism where somewhat lower in terms of reliability, and once again, emotional intelligence falling in the lowest when it comes to reliability. What I really found fascinating what the correlations between the self and others, and for the most part they actually fell along the lines of what I thought they might. The highest correlations between the self and others by far openness and conscientiousness, which was one of the few things that surprised me. In terms of openness I feel as if people are very aware of how outgoing they are and its very easy to pick up on via Facebook so it was no surprise that the correlation was so high, but I feel as if there would have been more of a disagreement with conscientiousness. It is such a hard trait to pick up on from simply looking at someones page and I feel as if people would most likely always overestimate on how conscientious they are so I didn't expect it to have such a high correlation. Similar to openness, extraversion is easy to pick up on just by looking at someones page so I am not surprised with the correlation being what it was, along with agreeableness. Neuroticism and Emotional Intelligence coming in at the bottom two was something i had expected as well, especially based on results regarding reliability. Neuroticism is perceived as more of a negative trait so I expected there to be disparities in terms of researches being honest in terms of what they saw on peoples pages and being honest and people perhaps not wanting to own up to how neurotic they really feel they are. I feel as if a similar phenomenon can be applied to emotional intelligence. While researchers have no problem being honest about whether they regard someone as emotionally intelligent or not, when people were answering the surveys about themselves they most likely wouldn't label themselves as someone was not not emotionally intelligent thus resulting in a lower correlation.

The biggest limitations we had with this project with simply that we couldn't get to know the subjects better. Our opinions were based on very limited information and our opinions about their personality traits may have been very wrong simply because it was based off of a few pictures. The experiment would have been much more accurate if we were able to at least talk to each of the participants briefly as there are traits that are hard to pick up on just by looking at someones profile. Unfortunately gathering fifty participants and speaking to each of them individually would have not only been difficult since many of the participants most likely didn't live close, but also taken up a lot of time.