

PRE-EMPLOYMENT HONESTY TESTING IN CROATIA

Development and Initial Validation of Personality-, Attitude-, and Admission-Based Integrity Tests

1. INTRODUCTION

Integrity tests, also referred to as honesty scales, are criterion-focused occupational scales specifically developed to assess dependability, integrity and honesty of applicants, thereby facilitating prediction of theft and future on-the-job dishonest behaviors (Ones, Viswesvaran, & Schmidt, 1995; Sackett & Wanek, 1996). "Overt" integrity tests typically involve two types of scales: an attitude and/or admissions scale. On the other hand, "covert" integrity tests consist of personality-based items with no obvious reference to theft or other dishonest behaviors.

In general, the validation studies of integrity tests showed satisfactory results:

1. their high reliability in selection context indicate that applicants' integrity scores are consistent and stable
2. integrity tests results show correlation with various relevant criterion variables
3. integrity tests scores predict wide range of counterproductive work behaviors (CWB)
4. the meta-analytic studies revealed that integrity tests are valid predictors of overall job performance and training performance as well. Indeed, integrity test are shown to have the largest incremental validity when used together with general mental ability tests (Schmidt & Hunter, 1998)
5. prevalence of CWB decreases after certain period of introducing integrity tests in selection systems.

2. GOAL

Workplace thefts result in huge economical losses for organizations and government. Hence, integrity tests would be especially useful for Croatian economy, where workplace thefts and other CWB are relatively frequent behavior. However, both Croatian selection research and practice lack such an instrument. Given the potential cultural specificity of the concept of workplace integrity, the goal of this study was to develop and validate the Croatian Integrity Test.

3. METHOD

The sample consisted of 277 Croatian students, which anonymously filled in the three integrity scales of Croatian Integrity Test (CIT, Tonković & Jerneić, 2012): Personality-, Attitude- and Admission-based. The scales were modeled after existing honesty tests and after thorough theoretical examination of constructs of integrity and counterproductive work behavior. The psychometrical criterion for retaining the item was a significant loading on the first component extracted by factor analysis of items of the same type. Finally, participants answered several criterion questions.

4. RESULTS

	Personality-Based	Attitude-Based	Admission-Based
k	31	33	69
Alpha	.86	.87	.96
r (intention to perform CWB)	-.58**	-.61**	.57**
r (admissions of past dishonesty)	-.61**	-.40**	-
r (attitudes toward honesty and CWB)	.50**	-	-.40**
r (self-appraised honesty)	.33**	.19**	-.22**
r (school punishments)	-.37**	-.18**	.39**
r (minor offenses proceedings)	-.23**	-.08	.33**
r (self-appraised academic success)	.24**	.11	-.13*
r (GPA)	.23**	.14*	-.18**
r (retaking exams)	-.18**	-.11	.22**
r (retaking courses)	-.20**	-.11	.17**
r (F gender)	.24**	.08	-.33**
Item example	<i>I like to take risks.</i>	<i>Nowadays it is better to be adaptive than honest.</i>	<i>Have you ever falsified someone else's signature?</i>

5. CONCLUSION

All the three scales of the Croatian Integrity Test (Personality-, Attitude-, and Admission-based) showed satisfactory psychometrical characteristics. Based on their inter-correlations and correlations with other measures of integrity and related constructs, we concluded they could be regarded as promising instruments for measuring integrity in research and practice of personnel selection in Croatia.

Future research should include examining scales' validities in other situations and samples, primarily on the sample of job applicants in selection situation. In addition, it is necessary to check to what extent are these items resistant to applicants' faking. Finally, it would be interesting to examine the cross-cultural stability of the construct of the workplace integrity.