

# Are There Personality Traits That Predispose Applicants to Fake Noncognitive Measures in Personnel Selection?

*Manuscript submitted for publication in Review of Psychology (2012)*

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## **ABSTRACT**

Previous research has shown that applicants' faking on personality questionnaires could lower their predictive validity and reduce the quality of selection decisions. Hence, several models that specify key determinants of applicants' faking responses on noncognitive measures have emerged. One of the common elements of these models is the important role of applicants' personality in predicting their motivation to fake and consequently faking behavior. Nevertheless, this assumption lacks systematical empirical validation. The goal of the present study was to investigate the role of applicants' personality facets in predicting the amount of faking on a noncognitive questionnaire. The total of 202 participants responded to personality inventory twice – first under instructions to respond honestly and afterwards under instructions to respond as an applicant in a simulated selection program. The difference between personality scores in two conditions represented the individual amount of faking, which was then regressed on the facet scores. As expected, the results confirmed significant contribution of Conscientiousness and Neuroticism facets in explaining the variance of faking. However, the most efficient predictors seem to be the facets of Openness. The obtained results provide support for personality traits having the important role in predicting applicants' faking behavior on noncognitive measures in personnel selection.

*Keywords: Faking, Models of faking, Personality, Five-factor model, Personnel selection*

## INTRODUCTION

In the context of personnel selection, faking can be defined as a “tendency for test takers to deliberately provide inaccurate responses to personality items in a manner that they believe will increase their chances of obtaining valued outcomes, such as favorable hiring decision” (Goffin & Boyd, 2009, p.151). Research has shown that candidates differ in this tendency, as well as selection programs in the level they make faking possible and probable (Dwight & Donovan, 2003; Griffith, Chmielowski, & Yoshita, 2007). Hence, faking can lower the predictive validity of personality questionnaires and reduce the quality of selection decisions (Dilchert, Ones, Viswesvaran, & Deller, 2006). Given the fact that faking is a behavior that cannot easily be detected, it is important to better understand the underlying psychological process (Goffin & Boyd, 2009), i.e. find the factors that determine the occurrence and the intensity of faking behavior. In the last decade several authors have systemized potential factors and suggested models that specify key determinants of faking behavior and relationships among them (Goffin & Boyd, 2009; McFarland & Ryan, 2000, 2006; Mueller-Hanson, Heggstad, & Thornton III, 2006; Snell, Sydell, & Lueke, 1999). Even though these models vary regarding both the specified determinants and nature of their relationships, there are several elements they all have in common. One of them is the importance of applicants’ personality in predicting their motivation to fake and consequently faking behavior. Some people are more prone to faking across many situations, while some will not be willing to fake even in situations that make faking easy. Hence, faking behavior in personnel selection should be, to a certain degree, determined by the candidate’s stable individual characteristics – personality traits.

The connection between dispositional factors and faking motivation and behavior has been recognized from the beginning of research on faking determinants – in the model proposed by Snell, Sydell, and Lueke (1999). The model has not been empirically tested, but the authors suggested that dispositional determinants should be searched for in stable individual traits that have been theoretically and/or empirically linked to deceptive behaviors. In partial validation of this model, Lueke, Snell, Illingworth, and Paidas (2001) found that people vary regarding their general willingness to fake. This finding confirms the hypothesis that there are individual differences that determine faking behavior. However, this research has not examined specific personality traits that could be potential predictors of the motivation to fake.

Roughly at the same time, hypothesis that faking behavior could be predicted by some specific personality traits was empirically confirmed by McFarland and Ryan (2000). In their study, Neuroticism explained 5.8 – 16.0% (depending on the faking operationalization), Conscientiousness 3.6 – 10.2%, and integrity 3.6 – 7.3% of the faking behavior variance. As hypothesized, high

Neuroticism results were positively correlated with intensity of response distortion while correlations with Conscientiousness and integrity were negative. Authors proposed a model (2000), in which relationship between personality and intention to fake was mediated by beliefs toward faking. Several years later, McFarland and Ryan (2006) integrated the Theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) into their model, and specified beliefs toward faking as attitudes toward faking, subjective norms (individual's perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform a behavior) and perceived behavioral control (individual's belief regarding the ease or difficulty with which a particular behavior can be performed). McFarland and Ryan confirmed the main assumptions of their revised model in a few empirical validations. Nevertheless, this research has not included a closer examination of relationship between faking behavior and dispositional factors. Actually, very few studies have done that. In two studies on faking integrity tests, Yu (2008) found that personality trait of Conscientiousness was moderately negatively correlated ( $r \approx -.30$ ) with both attitudes toward faking and intention to fake. The important role of personality was also confirmed in heuristic model of psychological processes underlying faking, proposed by Mueller-Hanson, Heggstad, and Thornton III (2006). Using structural equation modeling, they have identified that the best predictor of intention to fake was perception of the situation, followed by personality traits of Machiavellianism, Neuroticism and Conscientiousness.

According to the latest model, the General model of faking behavior, proposed by Goffin and Boyd (2009), the only proximal determinant of the faking behavior is the motivation to fake. Its important predictor is perceived ability to fake, which conceptually resembles perceived behavioral control – “an individual is less likely to be motivated to fake if he or she does not have a self-perception of being able to fake” (p. 154). Determinants of motivation and perceived ability to fake can be categorized into two major groups of factors: individual differences and situationally specific “contextual antecedents”. Relevant individual differences for predicting both motivation and perceived ability to fake include applicants' personality traits. Hence, personality influences motivation to fake both directly, and via enhancing perceived ability to fake. As Goffin and Boyd further suggest, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, Machiavellianism, integrity and need for approval are personality traits with the potential to affect an individual's motivation to fake and consequently faking behavior. In addition, the personality traits of narcissism, social astuteness, innovation, self-esteem, and two narrow facets of Conscientiousness — Competence and Achievement striving — potentially effect faking behavior through applicant's perceived ability to fake. Despite giving a comprehensive framework for understanding faking across noncognitive measures, Goffin and Boyd have not put their model under empirical validation.

Since it is still not clear which personality traits, and to what extent, determine the faking behavior, the goal of the present study was to investigate the role of applicants' personality in predicting the amount of faking on noncognitive measures in personnel selection. For this purpose, we used the most comprehensive taxonomy of personality – the Five-factor model (McCrae & Costa, 1987). It is a hierarchical organization of personality traits in terms of five basic dimensions: Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experiences, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness; each consisting of six lower-ordered facets (Costa & McCrae, 1995). These five relatively independent constructs altogether provide a meaningful classification for the study of individual differences in predicting faking behavior. More specifically, we investigated which of the personality dimensions and facets contribute to prediction of the faked responses on a personality inventory in simulated selection program. On the basis of the results of previous research (Mueller-Hanson et al., 2006; Yu, 2008), we assumed the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 1.* Conscientiousness facets will be negatively and Neuroticism facets will be positively correlated with faked responses on personality questionnaire. Extraversion, Openness and Agreeableness facets will not be related to measures of faking.

Even though traits of Conscientiousness and Neuroticism had already been proven to be valid predictors of motivation to fake, Goffin and Boyd believe that it makes more sense to consider narrow facets of both traits. This is because some of the facets on the same dimension can be related to faking behavior in opposite direction, which can neutralize their effect on faking when taken together. For example, Neuroticism facets of Anxiety, Depression and Vulnerability are proposed to have negative relationship with motivation to fake, contrary to Impulsiveness, which should be positively related to faking behavior. Considering the narrow facets of Conscientiousness, Goffin and Boyd propose that less motivated to fake would be the individuals scoring high in Dutifulness and Deliberation. On the other hand, more motivated to fake would be applicants high in Achievement striving and Competence. The latter relationships should be mediated by perceived ability to fake – Competence should be mediated fully and Achievement striving only partially, in addition to direct influence on motivation to fake. According to the assumptions of Goffin and Boyd (2009), we expect the following:

*Hypothesis 2.* The facets of Dutifulness, Deliberation, Achievement striving and Competence will have a significant contribution in explaining the variance of faking with the personality trait of Conscientiousness. Dutifulness and Deliberation should be negatively, while Achievement striving and Competence positively related to faking scores.

*Hypothesis 3.* The facets of Anxiety, Depression, Vulnerability and Impulsiveness will have a significant contribution in explaining the variance of faking with the personality trait of Neuroticism. We expect all the facets to be negatively related to faking scores, except for Impulsiveness which should be correlated positively.

## **METHOD**

### **Participants**

Participants were 202 students of the University of Zagreb and alumni that had graduated in the period less than a year prior to participation. 57% of them were female. Participants' age ranged from 19 to 30 years, averaging 23.2 ( $SD=2.10$ ). Psychology students and alumni were not included.

### **Measures and Procedures**

The personality dimensions and facets were measured with Croatian version of Goldberg's IPIP-300 questionnaire (*International Personality Item Pool*, Goldberg et al., 2006; Jerneić, Galić, & Parmač, 2007, for registered Croatian translation). Its 300 items measure the Five personality dimensions (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness) and thirty personality facets. Every personality dimension consists of six facets (see Table 2 for a list of facets and their classification), which are represented with 10 items each. Responses were made on a 7-point scale from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Participants responded to the IPIP-300 twice – first time they were asked to respond honestly (“honest” condition) and second time to respond imagining they are in a process of specific student scholarship selection program (“applicant” condition). As usual in faking research, we did not rotate the order of the two instructional sets. By instructing participants to respond „honestly“, we wanted to capture the true score of their personality dimensions. If the „honest“ condition came after the „applicant“ condition, the answers could be under the influence of the previous set and not reflect the true scores (Ellingson, Sackett, & Hough, 1999; Pauls & Crost, 2005). The within-subjects design enabled us to calculate an individual difference score between two different instructional sets. Since the first instructional set was designed to elicit as little distortion as possible and the second to elicit distortion comparable to real applicants' responding, the individual difference score represented a direct measure of faking in personnel selection. This rationale for composing a direct measure of faking was already used in several studies on determinants of faking behavior (McFarland & Ryan, 2000; Mueller-Hanson et al.,

2006). More detailed explanation on how direct measure of faking was calculated in this research will be provided in the Statistical Methods and Analyses section.

Finally, participants filled in socio-demographic questionnaire and answered three post-manipulation questions. More specifically, they were asked to estimate the attractiveness of the student scholarship program (how attractive they found the student scholarship program), their motivation to fake (to what extent instructions motivated them to fake their responses in applicant condition) and their perceived ability to fake (how successful they were in faking their responses in applicant condition). These estimations were also made on a 7-point scale ranging from *not attractive at all/not motivated at all/not successful at all* to *extremely attractive/extremely motivated/completely successful*.

Personality dimensions' scale reliabilities were very high in both conditions, with Alpha coefficients varying between .87 for Openness and .94 for Conscientiousness in "Honest" condition, and between .84 and .94 for the same two traits in "Applicant" condition. Alpha coefficients of the facets in "Honest" condition are shown in Table 2.

### **Statistical Methods and Analyses**

In order to examine the contribution of personality facets in explaining the variance of faking, we conducted a series of five multiple regression analyses – separately for facets of each dimension of personality. A distinct analysis for each dimension was necessary because of the way the direct measure of faking was formed. As we already mentioned, a direct measure of faking was calculated as an individual difference score between two different instructional sets. We calculated difference scores for all scales, hence each participant had five difference scores (i.e. a difference score for Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness, respectively). In order to get a measure of faking on the whole inventory, we summed up the absolute values of scale difference scores on all dimensions. However, when regressing the faking score on facets belonging to a specific dimension, the difference score on this dimension was excluded from summation of the faking score. Facets could not be correlated with the difference score on dimension they belong to, because the facets scores themselves are imbedded within the difference score. Thus, five criterion measures were used: faking score excluding difference score on Neuroticism, and four more faking scores excluding Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness, respectively. Their Alpha coefficients of reliability ranged from .59 (for faking score excluding difference score on Agreeableness) to .85 (for faking score excluding difference score on Neuroticism). Even though some of these values are on the lower border of acceptance, they are comparable to reliability of

difference scores used to measure faking in previous research on faking determinants (e. g. McFarland & Ryan, 2000; Mueller-Hanson et al., 2006). As Muller-Hanson et al. (2006) pointed out, the most serious consequence of such lower reliability estimates in correlational analyses (such as those performed in studies on faking determinants) is difficulty in observing relationship between predictors and faking behavior – since correlations are attenuated due to unreliability. Hence, in this study we might expect the explained variance of faking measures to be underestimated.

## RESULTS

### Manipulation Checks

To determine whether the manipulation in the “applicant” condition was effective, paired-samples *t*-tests were conducted for the five personality dimensions to compare the “applicant” condition responses to the “honest” responses (Table 1). Test scores in “applicant” condition were significantly higher for all scales, except for Neuroticism where they were significantly lower. The magnitude of the mean differences between the “honest” and “applicant” scores, expressed with *d*-indices of effect size (Cohen, 1988), was equal or even greater than those found in similar studies conducted in real or simulated selection situations (Hough, 1998; McFarland & Ryan, 2006; Viswesvaran & Ones, 1999). The present results indicate that the manipulation managed to motivate participants to behave like applicants, i.e. they distorted their results in socially desirable direction. Participants’ post-manipulation self-reports confirmed the conclusion that selection situation was simulated effectively. Participants found the simulated student scholarship program in “applicant” condition attractive ( $M=5.4$ ;  $SD=1.50$ ), claimed that the instructions did motivate them to fake their responses in applicant condition ( $M=5.2$ ;  $SD=1.61$ ), and estimated they faked successfully ( $M=5.1$ ;  $SD=1.20$ ).

Table 1. Paired-Samples T-tests Comparing Means Across the Honest and Applicant Conditions (N = 202)

	Honest Condition		Applicant Condition		<i>t</i> -value	<i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Neuroticism	218.1	42.46	131.0	31.67	25.124**	2.32
Extraversion	278.4	37.20	335.3	29.78	-19.129**	-1.69
Openness	298.4	33.22	313.9	27.85	-6.357**	-0.51
Agreeableness	298.2	33.38	315.9	33.41	-5.968**	-0.53
Conscientiousness	283.3	43.34	382.7	30.83	-28.586**	-2.64

Note. These statistics refer to personality facets assessed in “Honest” condition. \*\* Significant on  $p < .01$ .

## Test of Hypotheses

The means and standard deviations of 30 personality facets, together with their univariate and multiple correlations with faking scores, are presented in Table 2. All Neuroticism facets showed positive correlations with faking – the more neurotic person was, the more he/she faked. However, the positive correlation was hypothesized only for the facet of Impulsiveness. Self-Consciousness, Impulsiveness, Depression and Vulnerability all showed correlations above .30, which is considered as medium effect size (Cohen, 1988). Closely to that value was correlation of Anxiety ( $r(202) = .29, p < .01$ ), while Angry Hostility correlated with faking scores on the level of small effect size ( $r(202) = .24, p < .01$ ). When put together in regression analysis, the Neuroticism facets explained 15% of the faking scores. This was parallel to the finding of McFarland and Ryan (2000) that Neuroticism score explained up to 16% of the faking behavior variance. However, in the present study, the multiple correlation coefficient ( $R(202) = .41, p < .01$ ) was not much larger than correlation between same faking measure with Neuroticism scale score ( $r(202) = .38, p < .01$ ), suggesting that analysis on lower-ordered facets was not of great benefit to explanation of the criterion. In optimally weighted combination of the Neuroticism facets, the only two predictors were Self-Consciousness and Impulsiveness with standardized regression coefficients of .22 and .21, respectively. The remained Neuroticism facets showed no significant contribution. These findings are not exactly in line with our third hypothesis. Based on the model of Goffin and Boyd (2009), we assumed that, within the dimension of Neuroticism, the facets of Anxiety, Depression and Vulnerability would also have the significant contribution in explaining the variance of faking, in addition to Impulsiveness. Moreover, Goffin and Boyd (2009) neglected the impact of the facet of Self-Consciousness, which turned to be the best predictor among the Neuroticism facets. We might conclude that faking is related to traits indicating applicant's low self-confidence and low self-control, leading to higher motivation to fake.

Unexpectedly, faking scores also correlated significantly with most of Extraversion facets. However, these correlations were somewhat lower than those of Neuroticism facets and negative in sign – higher Extraversion scores were related to lower faking. The highest correlations were obtained by the facets of Activity and Warmth, which correlated with faking scores on the level of medium effect ( $r(202) = -.33, p < .01$ , and  $r(202) = -.29, p < .01$ , respectively). Other Extraversion facets showed small effect size correlations, with exception of Excitement seeking, which was not significantly correlated with faking scores. The fact that some of the facets were not significantly related to faking is in accordance with the finding that the multiple correlation coefficient ( $R(202) = -.38, p < .01$ ) was larger than correlation between same faking measure and the dimension scale score ( $r(202) = -.30, p < .01$ ). Extraversion facets together explained 11% of the criterion, with Activity being the only significant predictor. Possible interpretation of this finding is that active people – having lots



of activities, being more busy, and used to multitasking – are generally more successful and do not have need to fake their responses on personality questionnaires in order to enhance their chances to be selected.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Personality Facets and Results of a Series of Five Regression Analyses in which Faking was Regressed on Facets of each Personality Dimension Separately (N = 202).

Dimension	Facet	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Alpha	$r_{\text{Faking}}^{\#}$	$\beta$	<i>R</i>	$R^2_{\text{Adj}}$
Neuroticism	Anxiety	38.8	10.44	.81	.29**	-.02	.41	.15**
	Angry Hostility	37.2	10.64	.82	.24**	.03		
	Depression	26.2	10.12	.89	.30**	.11		
	Self-Consciousness	37.7	7.05	.56	.32**	.22*		
	Impulsiveness	40.1	8.03	.59	.31**	.21**		
	Vulnerability	38.1	8.85	.76	.30**	.01		
Extraversion	Warmth	50.3	9.11	.84	-.29**	-.17	-.37	.11**
	Gregariousness	46.5	10.02	.80	-.19**	.03		
	Assertiveness	46.9	7.81	.72	-.23**	-.02		
	Activity	40.1	7.87	.66	-.33**	-.25*		
	Excitement-Seeking	41.3	10.76	.82	-.05	.00		
	Positive Emotions	53.4	8.45	.80	-.19**	-.04		
Openness	Fantasy	51.9	10.32	.84	.24**	.26**	-.44	.17**
	Aesthetics	56.4	9.53	.81	-.10	-.08		
	Feelings	50.4	8.33	.71	.05	.03		
	Actions	47.7	9.27	.80	-.28**	-.29**		
	Ideas	51.0	9.20	.78	-.18**	-.13		
	Values	41.1	9.29	.66	.12*	.16*		
Agreeableness	Trust	48.7	8.89	.84	-.21**	-.12	-.30	.06**
	Straightforwardness	54.0	7.64	.72	-.13*	-.06		
	Altruism	56.7	7.27	.78	-.26**	-.23*		
	Compliance	50.0	8.93	.75	-.16*	-.02		
	Modesty	41.4	8.72	.77	.07	.08		
	Tender-Mindedness	47.4	7.23	.62	-.13*	.09		
Conscientiousness	Competence	47.7	7.27	.73	-.36**	-.30**	-.42	.15**
	Order	46.1	12.06	.87	-.12*	.07		
	Dutifulness	53.8	8.16	.77	-.17**	.01		
	Achievement Striving	48.0	9.29	.80	-.23**	.13		
	Self-Discipline	41.5	11.04	.88	-.33**	-.36**		
	Deliberation	46.2	9.24	.78	-.09	.12		

Note. These statistics refer to personality facets assessed in “Honest” condition. \*\* Significant on  $p < .01$ . \* Significant on  $p < .05$ . <sup>#</sup> When regressing the faking score on facets belonging to a specific dimension, the difference score on this dimension was excluded from summation of the faking score.

Openness turned out to be the only dimension which consists of facets correlating with faking in different directions. Higher scores on Actions ( $r(202) = -.28, p < .01$ ) and Ideas ( $r(202) = -.17, p < .01$ ) were related to lower faking scores, contrary to Fantasy ( $r(202) = .24, p < .01$ ) and Values ( $r(202) = .12, p < .05$ ) which were related to higher faking scores. Even though Openness scale score univariately showed zero correlation, its facets together explained 17% of the criterion, which was more than any other dimension's facets. The significant predictors remained Actions, Fantasy and Values. From these results we might conclude that more predisposed to faking would be the people who are more liberal in obeying rules, together with those who are imaginative and thus more capable to distort their personality responses in desirable direction. However, there is no plausible interpretation for negative correlation between faking and Openness to Actions – i.e. why do participants who are keen on adventures fake less, while participants who don't like changes fake more.

Again unexpectedly, faking scores were also significantly related to most of Agreeableness facets: Altruism, Trust, Compliance, Straightforwardness and Tender-Mindedness. All the correlations were on the small effect size level and negative in sign. Multiple regression analysis showed that Agreeableness facets together explained only 6% of the faking scores, with Altruism being the only significant predictor. The more altruistic participants were, the less they were prone to faking. This could be attributed to their effort to care about other people's needs and feelings, which might not be the case if they won a scholarship instead of somebody who "really deserved it".

Finally, Conscientiousness facets showed negative correlations with faking scores, with exception of Deliberation which showed zero correlation. The correlation of Competence ( $r(202) = -.36, p < .01$ ) was the highest of all univariate correlations between a personality facet and faking score. In Conscientiousness domain, it was followed by Self-Discipline ( $r(202) = -.33, p < .01$ ), Achievement striving ( $r(202) = -.23, p < .01$ ), Dutifulness ( $r(202) = -.17, p < .01$ ), and Order ( $r(202) = -.12, p < .05$ ). Most of these relationships turned out to be different than it was suggested by our second hypothesis – according to Goffin and Boyd's model (2009), Achievement striving and Competence should have been positively related to faking, while Deliberation negatively. Interestingly, our results confirmed a positive correlation ( $r(202) = .15, p < .05$ ) of Competence with perceived ability to fake (a post-manipulation self-rating of how successful were participants in faking their responses in applicant condition). Taken together, Conscientiousness facets explained 15% of the criterion, which was exactly the same as did Neuroticism facets. However, the increase in value of correlation coefficient (from univariate correlation between dimension scale score and faking to multivariate correlation between same faking score and facets scores – from  $-.28$  to  $-.42$ , respectively), was somewhat greater than for Neuroticism (from  $.38$  to  $.41$ , respectively). From this

we might conclude that inclusion of lower-ordered facets was of greater benefit to domain of Conscientiousness. In support of this conclusion goes the finding that McFarland and Ryan (2000) and Yu (2008), using solely dimension scale score of Conscientiousness, managed to explain only up to 10 percent of the faking scores. According to regression coefficients obtained in the present study, among Conscientiousness facets, better predictor for faking turned out to be Self-Discipline (-.36) not Competence (-.30). In this combination, the contribution of other facets was insignificant. These findings offer a plausible explanation why conscientious applicants are less prone to faking. People who are self-disciplined and do their tasks more promptly, suggesting they are more successful in their work than applicants who apt to procrastinate, perceive themselves as generally successful and competent. Thus, they might not have the need to distort their answers, and consequently have lower motivation to fake.

## **DISCUSSION**

The goal of this study was to examine the contribution of personality in explaining the variance of applicants' faking on a noncognitive measure. For this purpose, we operationalized personality with inventory measuring the dimensions and facets of the Five-factor model of personality. We used a series of five multiple regression analyses to regress faking scores on the facet scores, within each of the Five domains separately. The obtained results were not completely in line with our hypotheses, set on the basis of Goffin and Boyd's model of faking (2009). Expectedly, the results showed significant contribution of Conscientiousness and Neuroticism facets – each group of facets explained 15% of the criterion. However, the most efficient predictors of faking behavior seemed to be the facets of Openness, which explained 17% of the variance of applicant's faking. The Extraversion and Agreeableness explained the least, but still significant amount of the faking criterion (10% and 6%, respectively). On the facet level, our results showed that high faking scores could be best predicted with high scores on Impulsiveness, Self-Consciousness, Fantasy, and Openness to Values, together with low scores on Activity, Openness to Actions, Altruism, Competence and Self-Discipline.

In this research, faking was operationalized as an individual difference score between two different instructional sets – the first was designed to elicit as little distortion as possible, and the second to elicit distortion comparable to extent of real applicants' faking. We formed five inventory faking scores – each of them excluded difference scores of the dimension whose facets were then put in regression analysis to explain the faking score variance. Hence, we used different faking score for every group of facets. On one hand, this was necessary to avoid having correlating faking score

with facets being included in it, what would lead to spuriously overrated correlation coefficients. On the other hand, in this way an estimation of cumulative contribution of personality traits was made impossible. The fact that these five faking scores showed very high intercorrelations (in the range from .87 to .95), encouraged us to roughly compare contributions of separate groups of facets. However, to estimate their joint contribution, it would be wrong to simply sum up the percentages of variance explained by separate domains, because empirical studies regularly show that the Five factors of personality are not independent (e.g. van der Linden, te Nijenhuis, & Bakker, 2010). The eight facets that we highlighted as significant predictors of faking behavior showed intercorrelations in the range from  $r(202) = -.02$  ( $p > .05$ ) (between Altruism and Fantasy) to  $r(202) = .61$  ( $p < .01$ ) (between Self-Discipline and Activity). Thus, we might conclude that cumulative contribution of personality traits should be even more than 17%, especially when including a broader range of personality traits (e.g. self-monitoring, Machiavellianism etc.) that are not part of the Five-factor model. Since there are many other non-personality determinants (e.g. moral code, past experience, warning against faking...) proposed and/or confirmed in previous research (Goffin & Boyd, 2009; McFarland & Ryan, 2000, 2006; Mueller-Hanson et al., 2006; Snell et al., 1999), even one sixth of the variance of faking behavior explained by personality can be considered as relatively huge proportion.

When interpreting the results obtained in this study we should take into account its limitations. Namely, we used simulated personnel selection program on a primarily student sample – it is possible that in actual personnel selection natural tendency to fake is determined by other factors. For instance, some situational variables (“contextual antecedents”) could moderate relationship between personality traits and faking. We tested this assumption using the post-manipulation self-rating of attractiveness of student scholarship program simulated in this study. We expected that correlations between personality traits and faking behavior would be higher for participants who were more attracted by the outcome of the simulated selection, compared to participants who were not much attracted. Hence, we conducted a series of eight moderation regression analyses, for each of predictive facets separately. Specifically, faking score was regressed onto the facet, the self-report of attractiveness of the selection outcome, and the interaction/product of these two variables (Baron & Kenny, 1986). The moderator hypothesis was supported for the facet of Openness to Values, whose interaction with Attractiveness of the selection outcome was significant (Figure 1). For increasing level of Attractiveness of the selection outcome, the correlation between Openness to values and faking score turns from negative to positive. Given the fact that real-life selection applicants usually apply for the jobs they are attracted to, this finding suggests that the contribution of the personality in this study might have been underestimated, compared to real life situations. However, a laboratory study was needed to provide a direct

measure of faking through a within-subjects design. In actual personnel selection it would be much more difficult to ensure that applicants' answers in one condition were honest.

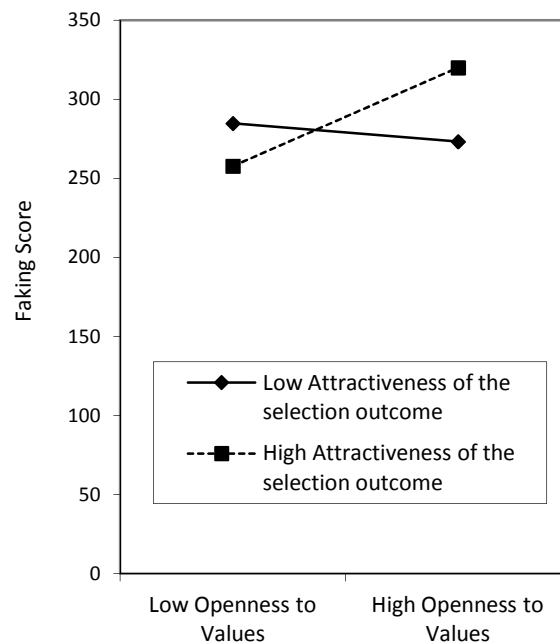


Figure 1. Interaction Plot of the Moderating Effect of the Attractiveness of the Selection Outcome on the Relationship between Openness to Values and Faking Score.

The findings of the present study make several contributions to the faking literature. To our best knowledge, this was the first study that has systematically tested which personality traits, and to what extent, determine the faking behavior on noncognitive measures in personnel selection. In addition, this study revealed the potential of facets of Openness to experiences in explaining the variance of faking. This was possible because the search for personality predictors was done not only on all of the five factors of the Five-factor model, but on the facets level as well. In previous studies, researchers focused on examining the effect of broader dimensions, neglecting the eventual adverse effect of narrow facets within the same broad dimension (Goffin & Boyd, 2009). Finally, as far as we know, this was the first study that has empirically validated some of the assumptions proposed by the General model of faking (Goffin & Boyd, 2009). In future research, we suggest more thorough examination of the personality-faking relationship by testing mediating effects of motivation and perceived ability to fake, as well as a replication on a non-student sample.

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