The Diversity-Validity Dilemma: Why Personality?

1. What is the Diversity-Validity Dilemma?

The diversity-validity dilemma concerns the tradeoff between selecting valid predictors of employee performance while minimizing adverse impact and selecting a diverse workforce. In a perfect world, organizations could focus solely on using any selection tool at their disposal for identifying job applicants who are most likely to be high performers. However, some of the most valid predictors of performance are often associated with the greatest differences in scores between gender and racioethnic subgroups (Pyburn, Ployhart, & Kravitz, 2008).

2. How does personality address this dilemma?

Table 1 provides published predictive validity coefficients as well as gender and racioethnic subgroup differences for a number of commonly used selection instruments. Only male-female and Black-White differences are shown below as these are the most commonly reported differences in the literature. Results suggest that many selection methods have the potential to cause adverse impact. For example, while general mental ability is one of the most valid predictor of performance (ρ = .51), it also demonstrates the largest subgroup differences (d = .99 between Whites and Blacks), therefore leading to the greatest potential for adverse impact. By comparison, personality can be equally as valid while resulting in minimal group differences (see Table 2). For this reason, selection methods that integrate personality with other predictors assessing the full range of KSAOs necessary for success (e.g., assessment centers) can maximize predictive validity and minimize the potential for adverse impact.

3. How do Hogan's assessments address this dilemma?

Table 2 provides published predictive validity coefficients as well as gender and racioethnic subgroup differences for the Hogan Personality Inventory. The Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI), Hogan Development Survey (HDS), and Motives Values Preferences Inventory (MVPI) predict meaningful job-performance outcomes across occupations and organizations with predictive validities often ranging from .20 to .40. Further, to date, no operational selection profile using the HPI, HDS, or MVPI has demonstrated adverse impact, and no claims of unfair employment discrimination have resulted from an employer's use of Hogan assessments (Hogan Assessment Systems, 2012). Therefore, using Hogan's assessments provides a useful means of helping address the diversity-validity dilemma.

Table 1
Validities and Standardized Subgroup Differences of Common Performance Predictors

Predictor	Validity (corrected)	*d*-value
Integrity Tests	.34[b]	
Male-Female		-.16[c]
White-Black		.04[c]
Structured Interviews	.44[d]	
Male-Female		n.r.
White-Black		.23[a]
Unstructured Interviews	.33[d]	
Male-Female		n.r.
White-Black		.32[e]
Situational Judgment Tests (written)	.34[a]	
Male-Female		-.12[a]
White-Black		.40[a]
Biodata	.35[a]	
Male-Female		n.r.
White-Black		.33[a]
General Mental Ability	.51[a]	
Male-Female		.00[a]
White-Black		.99[a]
Assessment Centers	.36[f]	
Male-Female		-.19[g]
White-Black		.52[g]

Note. d-value = The uncorrected difference in means scores for the majority and minority groups divided by their pooled standard deviations, where positive values indicate the majority (White or male) group scored higher than the minority group (Black or female); a = Ployhart & Holtz (2008); b = Ones, Viswesvaran, & Schmidt (1993); c = Ones & Viswesvaran (1998); d = McDaniel, Whetzel, Schmidt, & Maurer (1994); e = Hufcutt & Roth (1998); f = Arthur et al. (2003); g = Dean, Roth, & Bobko (2008); *n.r.* = not reported/could not find a reliable source. All values are meta-analytic estimates. Validities are corrected for range restriction and criterion unreliability.

Table 2
Validities and Standardized Subgroup Differences of the HPI

Predictor	Validity (corrected)	*d*-value
Adjustment	.43	
Male-Female		-.02
White-Black		-.08
Ambition	.35	
Male-Female		.22
White-Black		-.17
Sociability	*n.r.*	
Male-Female		.13
White-Black		.30
Interpersonal Sensitivity	.34	
Male-Female		-.37
White-Black		.11
Prudence	.36	
Male-Female		-.23
White-Black		-.27
Inquisitive	.34	
Male-Female		.30
White-Black		.08
Learning Approach	.25	
Male-Female		-.31
White-Black		-.18

Note. Positive values indicate the majority (White or male) group scored higher than the minority group (Black or female). All values are meta-analytic estimates. All *d*-values are from Hogan Assessment Systems (2012). All validity coefficients are from Hogan & Holland (2003). Validities are corrected for range restriction and predictor-criterion unreliability.

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