

When Will Interviewers Be Willing to Use High-structured Job Interviews? The role of personality

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This study investigates the effects that three types of interviewer personality traits (extra-version, agreeableness, and conscientiousness) can have on interviewer intention to use a high-structured interview (HSI). This study also investigates both the degree to which interviewers felt that their accountability to the interview regarding the process and the final employment decision influenced their intention to use HSI, and see if the accountability moderated the relationship between interviewer personality traits and interviewer HSI-use intention. Results from 327 interviewers show that the interviewers with high conscientiousness, agreeableness, and felt accountability were more inclined to use HSI. Moreover, highly conscientious interviewers who felt high outcome accountability would exhibit a relatively pronounced willingness to conduct HSI.

1. Introduction

Interviews are recognized as one of the most commonly used tools for personnel selection (Macan, 2009). Research has demonstrated that the high-structured interview (HSI) has higher criterion-related validity and better reliability than the low-structured interviews (LSI) regarding the effort to predict employee performance and organizational performance (Huffcutt & Arthur, 1994); and research has demonstrated that HSI norms in an organization are hard to form. Therefore, most organizations and interviewers in the early 2000s were still using LSI, and there is no evidence to suggest that this trend has changed (Dipboye, 1997; Rynes, Barber, & Varma, 2000). Unlike a job-knowledge test, an interview is a subjective tool for employee selection, and interviewer job-interview preferences – in addition to external environmental factors – affect the interviewers' actual interview behaviors (Chen, Tsai, & Hu, 2008). Therefore, it is necessary to identify and explore (1) the personal factors that affect interviewers' intentions to use HSI, and

(2) when strengthens or weakens such effects (Terpstra & Rozell, 1997; Van der Zee, Bakker, & Bakker, 2002).

Currently, only a handful of studies have investigated the antecedents of interviewer intention to use HSI (Chapman & Zweig, 2005; Chen et al., 2008; Lievens & De Paepe, 2004). Although, these studies have shown that several factors including personal contact with applicants and ease of preparation in interviews can influence interviewer behavioral intention to use HSI, the explained variation is typically low, between 13% and 36%. Therefore, there is a research gap that needs to be addressed. Examining this issue would provide organizations with further information that could help them enhance their use of HSI.

Dipboye (1994) states that interviewer personality factors affect interviewers' preference for using HSI. Ajzen (1991) similarly argues that personality plays an important role in explaining human behavioral tendency. Thus, this research uses interviewer personality traits as antecedents of interviewer intention to use HSI. In addition, interviewer felt accountability (FA) is another important factor that can influence interviewer judgment (Brtek & Motowidlo,

2002), and research has shown that this factor can improve the accuracy and validity of employment decisions (Dipboye, 1992). Interviewers who feel accountable to the actions during interview process and the final employment decision, they become aware that their supervisors will monitor and evaluate the given interview procedure and interviewer decisions, and that, as interviewers, they have a duty to justify their employment decisions in interview to their supervisors (Brtek & Motowidlo, 2002). When interviewers feel such higher accountability, they will evaluate an applicant more seriously by suppressing the influence of their personal feelings (i.e., their subjective preferences) (Rozell & Baxter, 1981). Although, FA has been shown to be an important factor in job-interview decisions, little research has explored its effect on interviewer behavioral intention (Ferris, Mitchell, Canavan, Frink, & Hopper, 1995; Frink & Ferris, 1998; Hochwarter, Perrewé, Hall, & Ferris, 2005). FA can be categorized as procedure accountability (PA) and outcome accountability (OA) (Siegel-Jacobs & Yates, 1996). When interviewers realize that supervisor is noticing an interview's procedure and outcome and that supervisor will ask them to justify their decision in interview, they will become more involved in the interview process (Brtek & Motowidlo, 2002).

Brtek and Motowidlo (2002) investigated these two accountabilities in job-interview contexts, and discussed the effects of PA and OA on interview validity. This study extends the aforementioned research, and provides improved research findings in two regards (one is research construct, another one is research design, and samples). As for research construct, Brtek and Motowidlo (2002) argued that although HSI is a useful tool for improving interview validity, management cannot always ensure interviewers' abidance to all HSI steps and requirements in job interviews. For this reason, Brtek and Motowidlo (2002) discussed antecedents (such as PA and OA) that would influence interviewers' motivation to use HSI. However, no less important than this kind of motivation are interviewers' preferences. Thus, this study proposes that before investigating the effects of PA and OA on improving interview validity, the discussion should be from PA and OA to interviewers' behavioral intentions, then, as Brtek and Motowidlo's (2002) research, interviewers' intentions influence their actual behaviors, and finally, their behaviors in using HSI indeed improve the interview validity.

This study proposes that, in addition to PA and OA, interviewer personality is a major predictor of interviewer intention to use HSI. Nevertheless, some personality traits influence behaviors owing to the appearance of trait-related situations (Kenrick & Funder, 1988). Based on trait activation theory (Tett & Guterma, 2000), personality does not always present itself in each moment, but can undergo activation caused by "cues" stemming from the fit between individual's trait and situations.

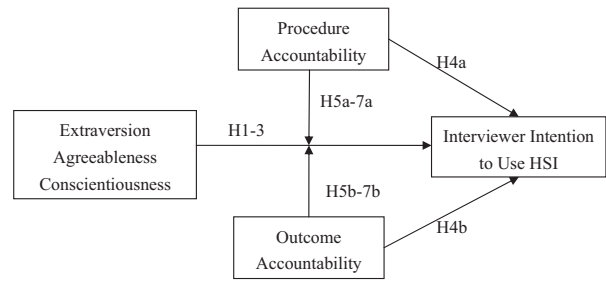


Figure 1. Research model.

When personality-related behavior is appropriate to a specific situation, the situation will trigger or promote individual display of relevant personality-related behaviors. In other words, the influence of personality on behavior is dependent on a particular situation, and PA and OA are these arousal cue.

Regarding research design and samples, Brtek and Motowidlo (2002) adopted an experimental design to evaluate the effects of PA and OA on interview validity, and this study conducts a field study in an organizational context. Brtek and Motowidlo (2002) invited undergraduates to participate in their experimental design, and asked these students to act as mock interviewers in a job interview. In the two experimental sessions, each participant (pretending to be an interviewer) watched 30 interview videos, and evaluated the leadership potential displayed by the applicants in the videos. But this research design raises one important issue that cannot be ignored: are the reactions of an undergraduate study participant and those of a real job interviewer equivalent to each other when both the participants and the interviewers perceive that the others (the researchers and the interviewers' supervisors) will be monitoring and reviewing their respective job-interview evaluations (Brtek & Motowidlo, 2002)? In a real organizational context, job interviewers' concern that a supervisor will assess their handling of the interview may prompt them to pay more attention to the interview.

In sum, the cited literatures raise two important research questions that merit our attention: (1) What interviewer-based factors influence interviewers' intentions to use HSI? And (2) when these above relationships been strengthened or weakened? Interviewer-based factors are significant antecedents of interviewers' intentions to use HSI (Chapman & Zweig, 2005; Chen et al., 2008; Lievens & De Paepe, 2004), and we propose that three types of interviewer personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness) and interviewer FA may very well affect interviewers' intention to use HSI. In addition, we extend the research of Brtek and Motowidlo (2002) regarding both PA and OA in our theoretical model, further exploring their moderating effects on the relationship between interviewer personality and interviewer intention to use HSI. Figure 1 presents the theoretical model.

2. Theory and hypotheses

2.1. Personality and intention to use the high-structured interview

An interview structure represents the degree of discretion interviewers have in conducting interviews. The structure's purpose is to decrease variation between applicants (Huffcutt & Arthur, 1994). The HSI contains two elements: (1) the requirement that each applicant be asked the same questions and (2) a standardized evaluation (Chapman & Zweig, 2005; Huffcutt & Arthur, 1994). Antecedents of HSI-use intention can be categorized into interviewer-related factors and situational factors (Chen et al., 2008; Lievens & De Paepe, 2004). Job interviewers—being an interface between job applicants and the applied-to organization—have the strongest power to resist HSI (Dipboye, 1994, 1997; Lievens & De Paepe, 2004). In addition, because extant empirical studies often focus on individual differences among interviewers in discussing their tendencies to reject the HSI structure, this study follows and extends this research stream.

The Big Five personality traits can predict many important organizational criteria, including job performance, job satisfaction, and turnover (Lounsbury, Hutchens, & Loveland, 2005). This study examines the effects that three types of personality traits (i.e., extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness) can have on interviewers' intention to use HSI. In organizational context, most job interviews are conducted by supervisors (Harris, 1989), in which their abilities to hire a sufficient number of new staff through selection tools like job interviews are usually considered as relevant for job performance evaluations. As meta-analytic study of personality traits (Barrick & Mount, 1991) suggested, aforementioned three personality traits (i.e., extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness) are valid predictors for evaluating manager's job performance. Thus, this study subsequently outlines the rationale for the linkages between these three personality traits and interviewers' intentions to use HSI.

In addition, Dipboye (1997) reviewed studies and provided a conceptual model to summarize six factors (e.g., the personal needs of the interviewers and maintaining procedural and distributive justice) that affect interviewer intention to use HSI. Most of these factors relate to interviewers' personal needs and interviewers' discretion in the interview procedure. Interviewer discretion refers to interviewers' expectation that they will exercise authority and control in the interview process, choosing topics, evaluation methods, procedures (Church, 1996; Dipboye, 1994). HSI decreases interviewer discretion. Harris and Eder (1999) argued that LSI could meet interviewer expectations of discretion in interviews, given the social features of LSI such

as informal contact with applicants, mutual communication, and follow-up questions. Moreover, in HSI interviewers are required to spend much time preparing the interview, a potential barrier for promoting HSI (Harris & Eder, 1999). However, Lievens and De Paepe (2004) contended that interviewers who possess a conventional personality-type according to the Holland Codes (Holland, 1997) tend to follow a prearranged task order and, thus, tend to prefer HSI. Chen et al. (2008) found that interviewers' desire for power and interviewers' cognitive styles are important variables that, in reflecting salient differences among interviewers, can help predict their HSI adoption.

Although past studies have linked interviewer personality to HSI-use intention (Chen et al., 2008; Lievens & De Paepe, 2004), they have examined narrow personality traits, such as cognitive style and judgment of character. Organizational contexts are very complex and dynamic. Narrow personality traits cannot fully explain the relationship between interviewer personality and HSI-use intention, and broader personality traits are better predictors of organizational phenomena (Ones & Viswesvaran, 1996). Therefore, this study uses three broad personality traits with relatively high predictive power to fill this research gap in this research topic.

2.2. Extraversion and intention to use HSI

Extraversion refers to individuals' prominent displays of passion, confidence, talkativeness, and sociability (Seibert & Kraimer, 2001). In job interviews, introversion affects interviewers' communication style, and extraverted interviewers have higher self-confidence in social environments and have deeper interactions with applicants than introverted interviewers have (Dipboye, 1992). However, HSI emphasizes the importance of implementing standardized questions and procedures to promote the reliability and validity of interviews (Hovland & Wonderlic, 1939). This emphasis decreases interviewers' opportunities to convey organizational culture to applicants (Dipboye, 1997), thus running counter to the social nature of extraverted interviewers.

HSI imposes detailed limits on interviewer hints and queries to avoid the insertion of interviewer biases into interviews (Campion, Palmer, & Campion, 1997). And because extraverted interviewers are passionate, lively, voluble, and social (Barrick & Mount, 1991), these interviewers generally dislike any suppression of their freedom to ask questions during interviews. For these reasons, extraverted interviewers may avoid HSI. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Extraversion is negatively related to interviewers' intention to use HSI.

2.3. Agreeableness and intention to use HSI

Agreeableness is a relationship-oriented personality trait describing the extent to which individuals is warm, friendly, selflessness, helpfulness, and cooperativeness (DeYoung, Quilty, & Peterson, 2007; Digman, 1990). In Lievens and De Paepe's (2004) study, they failed to find a significant negative relationship between social-type personality and interviewer willingness to use HSI. According to DeYoung et al. (2007) factor analysis, agreeableness can be separable into two subdomains: compassion and politeness. Compassion may be viewed as more relevant to warm and friendly, whereas politeness primarily appears to respect for other's needs and desires, and consider others (e.g., cooperation and compliance). In the job interview context, politeness may be the main factor to that influence interviewer intention to use HSI.

Agreeable interviewers value high-quality relationships, avoid conflict, and work cooperatively, so they exhibit compliance inside their organization (Costa & McCrae, 1985, 1992; DeYoung et al., 2007; Morgeson, Reider, & Campion, 2005; Mount & Barrick, 1995). If an organization establishes a rule that all interviewers must use HSI, interviewers possessing considerable agreeableness would likely follow the rule. In addition, agreeable people come across as softhearted and as considerate of others' feelings (Costa & McCrae, 1985). When a colleague from human resource department receive an order from his or her supervisor to promote HSI, agreeable interviewers might consider the situation the colleague is facing, so they would love to use HSI. Therefore, the higher an individual's agreeableness, the more likely the individual would be to use HSI. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: Agreeableness is positively related to interviewer intention to use HSI.

2.4. Conscientiousness and intention to use HSI

Conscientiousness refers to the personality trait of always working hard and responsibly, coping with tasks dependably and carefully, having patience and organizational ability, and being highly achievement-oriented (Behling, 1998). Conscientious interviewers are willing to perform well in the role of an interviewer, focus on the interview task, and accomplish the final goal (Lepine, Hollenbeck, Ilgen, & Hedlund, 1997; Morgeson et al., 2005). HSI provides conscientious interviewers with a standardized procedure for evaluating applicant performance and for making final decisions accurately. Further, conscientious interviewers are cautious, preferring to avoid risk and act only after thinking about all possibilities and influences (Barrick, Mount, & Judge, 2001). Interviewers who use identical questions and processes across a set of interviews can do

a better job than interviewers in unstructured interviews regarding the task of comparing performance among applicants and of improving interview validity (Latham & Finnegan, 1993).

HSI has detailed and clear scale items to assist interviewers in evaluating applicants (Smith & Kendall, 1963). When conscientious interviewers recognize the profitability of using HSI and want to improve their own ability to judge an interviewee, they can benefit from HSI's systematized questions, which typically zero in on job-relevant topics and reduce interviewer bias. On the basis of the above arguments, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: Conscientiousness is positively related to interviewer intention to use HSI.

2.5. Felt accountability and intention to use HSI

FA can be thought of as people's perception that somebody or something is supervising and evaluating them and that, consequently, they will have to account for their thoughts or actions to this party (Brtek & Motowidlo, 2002; Klimoski & Inks, 1990; Tetlock, 1983). People feel social pressure to exhibit expected behaviors, and may change their inclinations to perform these behaviors when supervised (Ajzen, 1991; Weigold & Schlenker, 1991). FA is a key factor in affecting interviewer behaviors in a job interview (Eder, 1989), because FA is a subjective perception, and interviewers with pronounced FA tend to tamp down on their own prejudices and to make decisions that conform to social expectations (Ferris et al., 1995; Frink & Ferris, 1998; Judge & Ferris, 1992).

Previous scholars classified the concept of accountability into two dimensions: PA and OA (Beach & Mitchell, 1978; Brtek & Motowidlo, 2002). PA occurs when individuals sense that someone else will evaluate a procedure for their decision-making, whereas OA occurs when individuals sense that someone else will evaluate the outcome of their decision-making (Siegel-Jacobs & Yates, 1996). These two dimensions are important in the interview literature, but only Brtek and Motowidlo (2002) examined these two dimensions in their empirical research. Therefore, this study considers these two variables simultaneously and tests their influences on interviewers' intentions to use HSI.

High-FA people put more time and effort into making use of complex procedures to implement tasks (McAllister, Mitchell, & Beach, 1979). Regarding job-interview procedure, high-FA interviewers will be more likely than low-FA interviewers to collect evidence and to determine quality interview strategies – behaviors that suppress bias and, thus, promote accurate evaluations (Tetlock, Skitka, & Boettger, 1989). Brtek and

Motowidlo (2002) and Siegel-Jacobs and Yates (1996) conducted experimental designs to test the effects of these two dimensions in interviews, and found that interviewers perceiving high PA make decisions that being of high validity, approximate professional judgments. High-PA interviewers typically use only one judgment strategy to improve decision consistency (Ashton, 1992) and, more so than low-PA interviewers, collect useful information to round out their consideration of the subject at hand (Tetlock, 1983). Accordingly, HSI can be a good interview tool for high-PA interviewers.

In addition, Cvetkovich (1978) found that decision-makers who if people need to must explain a decision their final option to other peoples, they will try to avoid making decisions based on intuition. Consider, for example, When interviewers perceive they are in a 'high issue involvement' situation (i.e., an 'outcome-relevant involvement' situation) (Johnson & Eagly, 1989): in such situations, interviewers often recognize, in which that bias their personal interest or the judgment will can undermine other people and, thus, affect others, they tend to use systematic, accurate, and realistic evaluative strategies (Chaiken, 1980; Tetlock, 1983). Therefore, when organizations ask interviewers to take responsibility for their decision-making, their difficulty in making decisions will increase (Zhang & Mittal, 2005). Because HSI uses a simple control process to raise judgmental accuracy (Campion et al., 1997), interviewers with high OA should have a high motivation to adopt HSI in their own interviews.

With these findings taken together, this research expects that interviewers with high-PA or high-OA will have a higher intention to use HSI than will low-PA or low-OA interviewers. This leads to our fourth hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4a: Interviewers' procedure accountability is positively related to their intention to use HSI.

Hypothesis 4b: Interviewers' outcome accountability is positively related to their intention to use HSI.

2.6. Felt accountability as a moderator

This study proposes that FA is not only an important antecedent of interviewers' intention to use HSI, but also a possible moderator in the relationships between interviewer personality and interviewer HSI-use intention. According to trait activation theory (Tett & Guterman, 2000), a behavior emerging from a personality trait emerges through *trait-relevant situational cues*. When a personality is appropriate to a situation, the situation will activate the personality, and will help trigger or strengthen certain behaviors associated with the personality. For example, a typical conscientious interviewer with an achievement-oriented personality would like to use HSI to make a qualified decision in an interview. On the same

note, a conscientious interviewer is more likely than a nonconscientious one to have an intention to use HSI. However, when the personality-situation relationship is irrelevant, which the situation cannot activate the personalities, two kinds of conditions are possible: the situation is a strong one or a weak one (Tett & Guterman, 2000). In a strong situation, such as an order from top-level management requiring that all interviewers adopt HSI, the interviewers' natural preference of the personality will be disguised. By contrast, interviewers will give expression to their natural personality in a weak situation.

Interviewers can be affected by the 'perceiver effect' (i.e., The tendencies of perceivers to see and evaluate other people in a particular subjective way), leading to biased evaluations (Bourne, 1977; Dornbusch, Hastorf, Richardson, Muzzy, & Vreeland, 1965). An interviewer's personality is a stable factor that influences the interviewer's evaluation, as noted above. However, FA is a strong situational cue. When evaluators perceive high accountability, they attempt to reduce the influence of their own personality, reduce personal prejudice, and choose a serious approach to obtaining a realistic judgment even their personality is not appropriate to the situation (Baxter, Hill, Brock, & Rozelle, 1981; Touhey, 1972); or strengthen their intention to use HSI when the situation is appropriate for some interviewers who have particular personality to show a suitable behavior.

FA is also a 'potential work environment stressor' (Hochwarter, Kacmar, & Ferris, 2003) because interviewers, knowing that their behaviors and decisions will come under scrutiny, will work harder than would otherwise be the case to maximize contributions (Ferris et al., 1995; Hall et al., 2003). Judge and Ferris (1992) found that biases usually exist in organizations' selection decisions if the organizations lack a rule requiring interviewers to take responsibility for their own interview-related decisions. Furthermore, people who are aware that they oversee their own decisions will tend to use a more complex and time-consuming information-processing procedure to make high-quality decisions (Janis & Mann, 1977; Tetlock, 1983).

Penley and Tomaka (2002) studied the relationship between personality and stress-related appraisals and responses, and demonstrated that extraverted people are easily aware of whether they possess sufficient knowledge and ability to accomplish a supervisor's order. If interviewers perceive high accountability and stress (which is also a strong situational cue), they will focus on their own knowledge and ability, reduce personal preference, and lessen their resistance to HSI. Petty and Cacioppo (1984) reviewed attitude-change references and identified two ways of triggering a person's change of attitude: the central route and the peripheral route. In an interview, when extraverted interviewers are aware that both the process and the outcome of the interview are related to the interviewers themselves, even their personality does not

promote a preference for HSI use: there will be a subsequent increase in the possibility that the interviewers will take the central route (Yang, Hung, Sung, & Farn, 2006); and personal preference will have a smaller effect on extroverted interviewers than on introverted interviewers (Petty, Cacioppo, & Schumann, 1983). Therefore, when interviewers feel high accountability, the original negative relationship between extraverted interviewers and their HSI-use intention will be weakened. Accordingly, we propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 5a: The higher an interviewer's procedure accountability (PA), the weaker the relationship between the interviewer's extraverted personality and the interviewer's HSI-use intention.

Hypothesis 5b: The higher an interviewer's outcome accountability (OA), the weaker the relationship between the interviewer's extraverted personality and the interviewer's HSI-use intention.

This study also hypothesizes that FA will moderate the relationship between interviewer agreeableness and interviewer HSI-use intention. An agreeable individual likes to build a positive and harmonious interpersonal relationship with others, and even sacrifices personal interests to achieve group goals (Buss, 1991; Koole, Jager, Van den Berg, Vlek, & Hofstee, 2001; Van der Zee & Wabeke, 2004). Van der Zee and Wabeke (2004) found that agreeableness, in particular, is positively related to impulse control. When decision makers have a sense of responsibility for the interview process and for the final interview decision, and when this sensed responsibility coincides with agreeableness in the decision makers, the decision makers will be more likely than they would be in a weak situation (with low FA) to carry out others' requests (Tetlock, 1985) and to use HSI. That is to say, high-agreeableness interviewers attempt to conform to organizational expectations. Agreeable interviewers' realization that their supervisors will monitor and assess the interview process or the interview outcome can reinforce the interviewers' intention to use HSI. Accordingly, this study hypothesizes that two strong situational cues (PA and OA) facilitate the agreeable interviewers to show their natural behavior for using HSI. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 6a: The higher an interviewer's procedure accountability (PA), the stronger the relationship between the interviewer's agreeable personality and the interviewer's intention to use HSI.

Hypothesis 6b: The higher an interviewer's outcome accountability (OA), the stronger the relationship between the interviewer's agreeable personality and the interviewer's intention to use HSI.

Conscientiousness is an organized, self-disciplined, and achievement-oriented trait. Individuals high in conscientiousness typically enjoy developing robust job-related knowledge and abilities to achieve a high-quality job performance. In this way, highly conscientious individuals tend to draw on high self-efficacy to accomplish specific task requirements. Self-efficacy is significantly related to task performance as well (Barrick & Mount, 2000; Mount & Barrick, 1995). Moreover, conscientious interviewers generally have an achievement orientation and desire to complete tasks successfully. Hence, these individuals generally engage in planning and analysis before making a decision, and FA can strengthen their conscientiousness (Brtek & Motowidlo, 2002). Conscientious interviewers prefer HSI because HSI can strengthen the accuracy of their interview decisions, in turn impressing the interviewers' supervisors, who will be that much more likely to evaluate the interviewers' performance highly. FA is a strong situational cue that permits and even urges interviewers to perform a conscientious and careful attitude in interview, thus intensifying interviewers' intention to use HSI. Thus, we propose the following two-part hypothesis:

Hypothesis 7a: The higher an interviewer's procedure accountability (PA), the stronger the relationship between the interviewer's conscientiousness and the interviewer's intention to use HSI.

Hypothesis 7b: The higher an interviewer's outcome accountability (OA), the stronger the relationship between the interviewer's conscientiousness and the interviewer's intention to use HSI.

3. Method

3.1. Participants and procedure

Participating in this study were 327 interviewers, each of whom belonged to one of fifty organizations and was either an HR professional or a line manager with extensive job-interview experience. We ensured that no more than 20 interviewers came from any one of the fifty organizations, and that each interviewer had at least one year's organizational tenure. To collect data for the present study, we adopted both Web-based (email) and paper-based questionnaires, and we made contact with potential participants through (1) private relationships between this study's researchers and potential participants, (2) contacts made with EMBA students, and (3) blind calls placed randomly to human-resource departments in organizations. In these ways, we successfully invited the 342 interviewers to participate in this study. A cover letter explaining the purpose and scope of the study assured respondents of strict anonymity. Of the participants, 62% were males and slightly more than 78% had bachelor degrees. The mean

age was 38.2 years ($SD = 7.46$). Moreover, 81% were in managerial positions, 13.4% were in HR department, average organizational tenure was 8.35 years ($SD = 6.60$), 38% had participated in interview training, and the mean training time was 5.8 hr ($SD = 13.2$).

3.2. Measures

3.2.1. Personality

We adopted Goldberg's (1992) Big Five personality scale to measure the interviewer traits of extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. We also used a series of 10 bipolar adjectives for each factor (on a 5-point scale). Sample items for extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness include 'talkative-silent,' 'unselfish-selfish,' and 'organized-disorganized.' The values of Cronbach's α were 0.88, 0.85, and 0.89, respectively.

3.2.2. Felt accountability

We referred to Brtek and Motowidlo (2002), Siegel-Jacobs and Yates (1996), and Zhang and Mittal (2005) to develop scales for PA and OA using six items each. We then invited six HR graduate students to examine the content validity and clarity of the items. Moreover, three managers with extensive job-interview experience suggested further revisions to improve the items' wording. After these revisions, each of the two dimensions had four items. We adopted exploratory factor analysis to assess PA and OA factor structure and found that each item was in its expected factor. After deleting cross-loading items, five items remained in this study (three for PA and two for OA). Sample items include 'I need to explain to managers how I acquire important information from applicants for use as a decision-making standard' (PA) and 'The supervisor will evaluate my interview-decision quality on the basis of existing standards' (OA). The Cronbach's α for PA and OA were 0.86 and 0.64.

3.2.3. Interviewer intention to use HSI

We used six indicators (two items for each indicator) from Chen et al. (2008) to assess the six notions which were often used in HSI study on a 6-point scale. The six notions are as follows: (1) the interviewer prepared questions before the interview; (2) the interviewer designed questions according to the requirements of the job vacancy; (3) the interviewer asked the same questions to each applicant; (4) the interviewer asked questions in the same order for each applicant; (5) the interviewer used the evaluative form to assess each question after the interview; and (6) the participant used questions resting on a single standard of evaluation. A sample item of this construct is 'I would design the interview questions according to the requirements of the job vacancy.' The Cronbach's α for this measure was 0.88.

3.2.4. Control variables

Research has shown that interview training for interviewers can increase their intention to use HSI (Lievens & De Paepe, 2004). Besides, interviewers who came from a non-HR background (Terpstra & Rozell, 1997) or handled a manager-level job vacancy might be more likely than other interviewers to resist using HSI (Chen et al., 2008). In addition, Dipboye (1994) found evidence that interviewers with a high need for power tend to desire a significant amount of control over the whole interview procedure and, thus, to resist using HSI. Moreover, this study remains the other two types of personality traits (i.e., emotional stability and openness to experience) to control their influence on the hypothetical relationships. Thus, this study controls for six factors: *interviewer training*, *type of interviewer title*, *type of job vacancy*, and *interviewer need for power*, *interviewer traits of emotional stability and openness to experience*.

This study used dummy variables to assess *type of interviewer title* and *type of job vacancy*. Regarding *type of interviewer title*, 1 stood for HR position and 0 stood for non-HR position. And regarding *type of job vacancy*, 1 stood for managerial vacancy and 0 stood for nonmanagerial vacancy. In addition, the participating interviewers provided their real training hours as the values for *interviewer training*. In assessing the need for power on a 6-point scale, we used five items from Steers and Braunstein's (1976) measurement (Manifest Need Questionnaire, MNQ). A sample statement is 'I expect to play an important role in a team.' The Cronbach's α was 0.70. Finally, the present study also adopted Goldberg's (1992) Big Five personality scale to measure the interviewer traits of emotional stability and openness to experience. And the values of Cronbach's α were 0.86, and 0.87, respectively.

3.3. Analyses

As more than one sample was obtained from each organization (each organization yielded an average of 4.51 interviewers), we followed Hofmann (1997) and conducted ICC(1) to search for obvious between-organization variance. The resulting value was .05, indicating that only 5% variance derived from organizational-level factors. An appropriate ICC(1) for aggregating the individual data to the organizational level was .12 (Bliese, 2000; James, 1982), and an ICC(1) of .05 was trivial and lacked the conditions of aggregation (James, 1982). In addition, because the current study's main research purpose was to investigate interviewer-level phenomena, we adopted an individual level-of-analysis and tested the hypotheses using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression.

3.4. Results

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviation, and simple correlations of all variables. Before testing the

Table 1. Means, standard deviations, and correlations among variables

Variables	Means	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Interviewer training	5.77	13.18	—											
2. Type of interviewer title	—	—	-.05	—										
3. Type of job vacancy	—	—	.22**	.43**	—									
4. Interviewer need for power	4.27	.66	.04	.13*	.08	(.71)								
5. Emotional stability	3.52	.58	.07	.08	-.04	-.01	(.86)							
6. Openness to experience	3.97	.48	-.02	.12*	-.05	.37**	.36**	(.87)						
7. Extraversion	3.67	.59	.06	.01	.02	.38**	.35**	.47**	(.88)					
8. Agreeableness	3.96	.47	.06	.00	.04	.07	.47**	.40**	.44**	(.84)				
9. Conscientiousness	4.09	.48	-.03	.09	-.01	.25**	.43**	.53**	.33**	.53**	(.88)			
10. Procedure accountability (PA)	4.27	1.13	-.09	-.02	.08	.02	.11*	.08	.03	.06	.07	(.86)		
11. Outcome accountability (OA)	3.80	1.16	-.07	-.00	.04	-.07	.05	.02	.04	.10	-.01	.60**	(.64)	
12. Interviewer intention to use HSI	4.46	.68	.07	.03	.09	-.03	.09	.11†	.01	.26**	.22*	.13*	.15**	(.88)

*p < .05; **p < .01.

Note: 1. N = 311–327; Cronbach's α coefficients are on the diagonal.

2. Title was coded by 1 = interviewer is HR and 0 = interviewer is non-HR.

3. Vacancy was coded by 1 = the vacancy was a managerial position and 0 = the vacancy was a nonmanagerial position.

hypothesized model, we adopted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to evaluate whether a nine-factor structure (comprising need for power, emotional stability, openness to experience, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, PA, OA, and interviewer intention to use HSI) was appropriate for our data. Because a large number of items were included in this study, the sample size to the number of items is insufficient for analysis (Little, Cunningham, Shahar, & Widaman, 2002). Hence, we randomly parceled each Big Five personality scale into three items, and created two-item parcels for interviewer intention to use HSI (one for interviewer's opinion about HSI, and another one for interviewer's willingness to use HSI).

Results of the CFA show that the nine-factor model provided a good fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 633.14$, $df = 288$, CFI = .92, NFI = .86, NNFI = .90, SRMR = .062) (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). These indexes were in no way perfectly separable from competing models, so we compared the nine-factor model to the eight-factor model (PA and OA as a single factor), the four-factor model (PA and OA as a single factor, and all Big Five personality items as another single factor), and the one-factor model. The results show that the nine-factor structure is better than the eight-factor model ($\Delta\chi^2 = 32.99$ [$p < .05$], $df = 296$, CFI = .91, NFI = .85, NNFI = .90, SRMR = .063), the four-factor model ($\Delta\chi^2 = 1000.91$ [$p < .05$], $df = 318$, CFI = .69, NFI = 0.64, NNFI = .66, SRMR = .095), and the one factor model ($\Delta\chi^2 = 2294.46$ [$p < .05$], $df = 324$, CFI = .38, NFI = .36, NNFI = .33, SRMR = .140). As some focal variables are highly correlated (e.g., PA is highly related to OA [$r = 0.60$, $p < .01$]), we further examine discriminant validity regarding the nine focal variables using the confidence interval method (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). We examined 36 confidence intervals and the results indicated that none of them included 1 (e.g., the range of PA and OA is 0.69 to 0.89). Overall, these results support the viability of the expected factor structure and provide evidence for discriminant and convergent validity.

Table 2 presents the results of our hierarchical regression analysis for testing (1) the main effect of interviewer personality and FA on interviewer intention to use HSI and (2) the moderating effect of FA on the relationship between interviewer personality and interviewer intention to use HSI. The table features eight models, with interviewer intention to use HSI functioning as the dependent variable. For its control variables, Model 1 used interviewer training, type of interviewer title (HR position or non-HR position), type of job vacancy (managerial position or nonmanagerial position), interviewer need for power, and two personality traits (emotional stability and openness to experience). Models 2, 3, and 4 plugged extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness into the regression to test Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3. On the basis of the above control variables and the main independent variables, this research further added PA and

Table 2. The relationships among interviewer personality, interviewer felt accountability, and interviewer intention to use HSI

Variables	Interviewer intention to use high-structure interviews							
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Control Variable								
Training	.06	.06	.05	.07	.07	.07	.07	.07
Title	.10	.10	.11	.10	.11	.11	.10	.09
Vacancy	.12	.13	.12	.12	.11	.12	.11	.10
Need for power	-.08	-.06	-.07	-.11	-.06	-.05	-.06	-.05
Emotional stability	.05	.06	-.05	-.03	-.07	-.05	-.05	-.06
Openness	.11	.14	.03	.02	.02	.02	.01	.03
IV								
Extraversion(1)		-.06 (H1)			-.13*	-.13*	-.13	-.12
Agreeableness(2)			.27**(H2)		.24**	.22**	.24	.19*
Conscientiousness(3)				0.25**(H3)	.16**	.17*	.18	.19*
Moderators								
PA(4)					.11*(H4a)		.11*	
OA(5)						.11*(H4b)		.11
Interaction Terms								
(1)*(4)							-.00(H5a)	
(2)*(4)							-.09(H6a)	
(3)*(4)							.02(H7a)	
(1)*(5)								-.10(H5b)
(2)*(5)								-.10 (H6b)
(3)*(5)								.14*(H7b)
R ²	.04	.04	.09	.08	.13	.13	.13	.15
ΔR ²	—	.00	.05**	.04**	.01*	.01	.01	.02

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Note: $N = 311$ – 327 ; all coefficients are standardized.

OA into the regression in Models 5 and 6 to test Hypotheses 4a and 4b.

Table 2 summarizes the results of the hierarchical regression. Agreeableness was positively related to interviewer intention to use HSI ($\beta = .27, p < .01$), and conscientiousness was positively related to interviewer intention to use HSI ($\beta = .25, p < .01$). PA was positively related to interviewer intention to use HSI ($\beta = .11, p < .05$), and OA was positively related to interviewer intention to use HSI ($\beta = .11, p < .05$), offering support for Hypotheses 2, 3, 4a, and 4b. However, the relationship between extraversion and interviewer intention to use HSI was not significant ($\beta = -.06, p > .10$); thus, Hypothesis 1 was not supported.

In Model 7, a moderated regression was performed in which three possible two-way interaction terms were added as predictors (extraversion \times PA, agreeableness \times PA, and conscientiousness \times PA). As shown in Table 2, these interaction terms could not provide additional explained variance ($\Delta R^2 = .01, p > .10$), and did not influence interviewer intention to use HSI ($\beta = -.00, -.09$, and 0.02 respectively, all $ps > .10$). Thus, there was no support for Hypotheses 5a, 6a, and 7a.

Model 8 plugged the other three two-way interaction terms (extraversion \times OA, agreeableness \times OA, and conscientiousness \times OA) into the regression. In Hypothesis 5b and 6b, both the relationships of extraversion \times OA-interviewer intention to use HSI, and agreeableness

\times OA-interviewer intention to use HSI were not significant ($\beta = -.10$ and $-.10$ respectively, all $ps > .10$), providing no support for Hypotheses 5b and 6b.

Finally, conscientiousness \times OA and interviewer intention to use HSI exhibited a significant positive relationship ($\beta = .12, p < .10$). To understand the pattern of the interaction effect, we followed Cohen and Cohen's (1983) steps and drew the type of interaction, shown in Figure 2, illustrating that (1) when OA was low, interviewer conscientiousness was related positively to interviewer intention to use HSI, and that (2) when OA was high, the

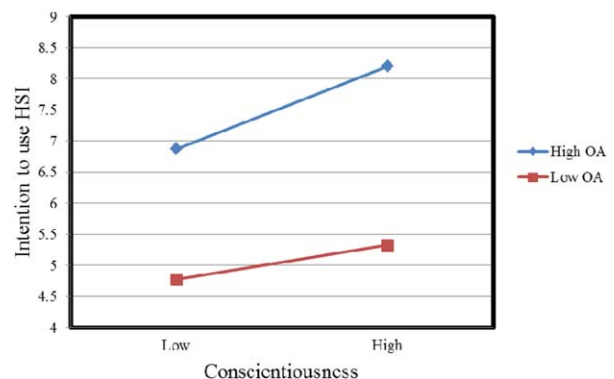


Figure 2. The moderating effect of OA on conscientiousness and intention to use HSI.

relationship was even stronger. These findings provide evidence supportive of Hypothesis 7b.

One possible concern is whether the result showing that interviewer's willingness to use HSI and personality traits are correlated may reflect a statistical power due to the other two interviewer personality traits (i.e., emotional stability and openness to experience). The following post hoc analysis suggests that this is not the case. Following the aforementioned procedure, we run a series of hierarchical regression analysis for testing the main effect of five interviewer personality and FA on interviewer intention to use HSI, and the moderating effect of FA on the relationship between interviewer personality and interviewer intention to use HSI. After containing additional two personality traits (emotional stability and openness to experience), the findings of main effect were identical to the present study (H2, H3, H4a, H4b, and H7b were significant, $\beta = .26, .25, .11, .11,$ and $.18$, respectively), but openness to experience was also related positively to interviewer HSI-use intention ($\beta = .14, p < .05$). Moreover, the findings provide evidence supportive of Hypotheses 7b ($\beta = .18, p < .05$), but not for the interacted terms of emotional stability \times PA, openness to experience \times PA, emotional stability \times OA, and openness to experience \times OA ($\beta = .08, .02, .05,$ and $-.06$, respectively, all $ps > .10$). In addition to the main effect of openness to experience, the results of post hoc analysis turns out that the effect of two personality traits do not affect our main results, providing additional information to understand the concept of interviewer intention to use HSI; the implications are further discussed in the discussion section.

4. Discussion

The aim of this study is to identify and examine (1) the effects that interviewer-related factors can have on interviewer intention to use HSI and (2) the scenarios in which these effects are strong or weak. By integrating these two issues into one research model, this study extends Brtek and Motowidlo's (2002) research by integrating two kinds of antecedents (personality and accountability) and two kinds of moderators (PA and OA), by presenting a novel field-study design, and by featuring real job interviewers as the research sample. The findings have contributed to the job-interview field in several regards discussed below.

First, we based our study on Brtek and Motowidlo's (2002) suggestion that future research explore accountability in job-interview contexts, and contains interviewers' personality in exploring what factors can predict interviewers' intentions to use HSI. Furthermore, Brtek and Motowidlo (2002) stated that PA could improve an interview's validity, because high-PA interviewers would focus on job-relevant information and force themselves to use HSI. According to Tetlock (1983), interviewers'

awareness that their job-interview conduct is being monitored and evaluated can strengthen the interviewers' motivation to use HSI. The findings also echo Dipboye's (1992) and Eder's (1989) arguments that the degree of interviewer FA can affect the given interviewer's information-gathering practices and decision-making outcomes. This study is a response to the aforementioned call for research, and thus, explores both FA in the interview context (Eder, 1989) and the potentially significant effects that interviewer can have to predict interviewer intention to use HSI. In addition, we performed a post hoc analysis to explore the potential influence of the other interviewer personality traits (i.e., emotional stability and openness to experience). These findings only prove that openness interviewer have higher intention to use HSI. Another direction for future research to further investigate the current findings related to the association between these two personality traits and HSI-use intention.

Interviewer personality can affect their intention to use HSI. It has long been investigated that supervisor's idiosyncrasies play an important role in affecting their motivation, behavior, and the evaluation of employee in performance appraisal context (Wherry & Bartlett, 1982). Specially, 20%–30% variations in job performance outcome are specific to the rater (Viswesvaran, Ones, & Schmidt, 1996). This study extends the concept of interviewer personality in employment interview by means of empirically tests, and attempts to show that agreeable interviewers tend to value the quality of interpersonal relationships, avoid conflict, and follow organizational guidelines for using HSI. In other words, agreeable interviewers are thus likely to use HSI. And conscientious interviewers are good at analyzing, assessing, and planning in advance, and HSI characteristics match such interviewers' tendency to array tasks sequentially (Chen et al., 2008). Accordingly, this study advances our knowledge of these matters by clarifying that interviewers' FA and personality, as factors, can help predict interviewer intention to use HSI.

Based on trait activation theory (Tett & Guterman, 2000), this study argues that the impact of interviewer personality on their intention to use HSI which may be strengthening or weakening. The findings also prove that high conscientious interviewers' intention to use HSI will be strengthened with those responsible for the final decisions. FA is a strong situational cue, when interviewer's personality meets trait-relevant situational cue, the situation will activate interviewer's personality and strengthen his/her nature. When people (e.g., interviewers) feel accountable, they adjust their motivation, preference, and behavior to meet regulations (Tetlock & Kim, 1987), and consequently follow HSI.

In practice, personality traits not only are good criteria for predicting employee job performance (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Lounsbury et al., 2005; Ones & Viswesvaran, 1996), but also constitute a useful standard for

determining which interviewer personalities favor HSI. Therefore, personality scales can facilitate applicant-selection processes and, even before an interview gets underway, can help identify potential interviewers whose personalities suggest a willingness to use HSI. In this regard, interviewers' perception of displaying high PA and OA are important factors in the interviewers' intention to use HSI. Drawing on this principle, organizations that design managerial systems conducive to interviewer accountability might promote interviewer use of HSI. For example, supervisors can review and assess the outcomes of interview. Indeed, there is evidence that such systems are possible, as Hochwarter et al. (2005) stated that organizations can stimulate an individual's FA by designing an objective responsibility system. And according to the current study's findings, interviewers with high PA and OA prefer a standardized procedure and collect impressive amounts of information, thereby improving the quality of interviewers' final decisions.

Take the format of interview as another example. Multiple interviewers may help interviewers increase their accountability, thus leading to focus on job-relevant information of applicants (McCarthy, Van Iddekinge, & Campion, 2010). For example, HR can set aside a series of interview procedures for discussion immediately following the interview in which interviewers can justify their observation, evaluation, questions, and final decision (Dixon, Wang, Calvin, Dineen, & Tomlinson, 2002). The plan can promote interviewers PA and OA, enhance their intention to use HSI, and strengthen conscientious interviewers' preference. Therefore, organizations should consider constructing norms that forced interviewers to be responsible for the procedures and outcomes of interviews.

A second regard in which our current study's findings have contributed to the job-interview field is the study's examination of FA possible moderating effects on the relationship. OA is a strong situational cue that can activate and strengthen the behavioral intentions of conscientious interviewers, thus promoting HSI-use intention. In other words, the very nature of conscientious interviewers leans toward using HSI because, as the research shows, HSI can strengthen the accuracy of their job-interview decisions and the possible responds to the consequence of OA. For this reason, interviewer perception of display of high OA can strengthen the positive relationship between interviewer conscientiousness and interviewer intention to use HSI. So if an HR department wants to promote HSI in job interviews, managers there not only should select more highly conscientious interviewers, but also should establish a review system assessing – and, thus, promoting – interviewer responsibility. Both personal interviewer factors and interview task requirements can reinforce interviewer intention to use HSI, a process that – by stimulating a positive learning

atmosphere – might encourage even more interviewers to use HSI.

Our findings fail to reveal a significant relationship between interviewer extraversion and interviewer intention to use HSI. It is possible that extraverted individuals enjoy experimenting with novelties (DeYoung, Peterson, & Higgins, 2002), and in this regard, extraverted interviewers may regard HSI as an appealing novelty rather than simply as a new tool, which cover interviewers' sociability. Perhaps this explanation behind our proposed relationship will offset the expected effect in this study.

The results of this study's regressions also do not support the assertion that PA plays a moderating role in the relationship between personality and interviewer intention to use HSI. It is possible that PA emphasizes interviewers' assumption of responsibility for key aspects of interview process (e.g., how to search information and make decision by considering important information), but OA focuses on their final decision and the new employees' future job performance when they are hired. Therefore, compared with obvious outcomes such as job performance, interviewers would feel lower pressure during the interview process, and will likely exhibit more bias during interviews than interviewers who need to take responsibility for the final employment decisions.

Surprisingly, our study has uncovered evidence suggesting that high OA will strengthen the negative relationship between interviewer extraversion and interviewer intention to use HSI. This finding was well outside our expectations. One possible reason for this finding is the sample we used: most participating interviewers had attained a degree of seniority (mean job tenure was 8.5 years), and most of the corresponding job vacancies were entry-level positions. Senior employees usually have more job-interview experience than junior employees, and the challenges of filling entry-level positions are typically less daunting than the challenges of filling managerial positions. Thus, most senior interviewers have high self-efficacy in interviews (Penley & Tomaka, 2002) and handle interviews for entry-level positions with particular self-assurance. Therefore, will not weaken the negative effects that OA can have on the relationship between extraverted interviewers and HSI-use intention, and so extraverted interviewers would likely to use HSI as usual.

4.1. Limitations and future research

Several limitations in this study qualify its theoretical and practical contributions. First, all variables in the present study derive from a single source's data, and conducting a cross-sectional design. These may raise concerns about common method bias, and we used Harman's one-factor test to minimize these concerns (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, & Podsakoff, 2003). The results of the test reveal that all factors account for 60.00% of the total variance, and the first

factor explains only 33.87% of the variance, indicating that no single factor can account for the majority of covariance in all research variables. In addition, the scale of the independent variables adopted from the five personalities of Goldberg (1992) is bipolar, whereas we used 6-point Likert scale to measure the dependent variable. Different scales for different variables can reduce concerns about common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Therefore, the common method variance is not a critical issue in this study. Nevertheless, future research would benefit from both a longitudinal design and data derived from multiple sources.

Interviewer intention to use HSI cannot represent actual use behavior (Van der Zee et al., 2002). Hence, future research should examine interviewers' actual HSI use, paying special attention to variables such as frequency of use (Lievens & De Paepe, 2004). In addition, our findings are similar to those of Chen et al. (2008) in that the explained variance of interviewers' intentions to use HSI is somewhat low. Future studies can investigate a wider sweep of personal interviewer traits to increase the explanatory power of HSI-use intention. For example, high growth needs interviewers may prefer to use LSI because HSI restricts interviewers' autonomy and flexibility (Dipboye, 1994).

Moreover, the moderators in the study are all individual-level concepts. Future research should examine FA at the organizational level and should input organizational-level variables into the research model to determine the latent factors that influence interviewer intention to use HSI. Examples of such variables may include interview time limits (Beach & Mitchell, 1978) and the selection ratio of employment (Chen et al., 2008; Robert, 1967).

Finally, as advanced technology grows popularity rapidly in human resource management practices (Viswesvaran, 2003), managers and HR practitioners are forced to introduce computer and web-based technology as a supplement or alternative to traditional staffing tools. For example, HR practitioners can use telephone interviews with automated recordings for a large scale interview context to reduce both traffic costs of applicants and personnel expenses of interviewers. Therefore, a fruitful area of future research will, thus, be to look into the issues related to the advanced technology in job interview for practical operation.

5. Conclusion

Our research has uncovered evidence suggesting that interviewer agreeableness, conscientiousness, PA, and OA are important antecedents of interviewer intention to use HSI, and has identified FA as an important contingency that might strengthen the effects of interviewers' personality on HSI-use intention. Our findings extend existing knowledge about the antecedents and the con-

textual factors underlying interviewer intention to use HSI. Future research can draw on our research findings to address gaps in the research and in actual practice by addressing additional factors, by adopting a longitudinal research design, and by inviting supervisors and managers to share their own perspectives on related matters in a survey similar to the one used here.

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