Performance and personality testing for employees

Business

Summary Deborah Powell and Richard Goffin are respected scholars in the field of psychology, while Ian Gellatly is an academician in the world of business. The authors' professional backgrounds testify their authority to comment authoritatively on the issue under study, namely the extent to which personality test scores impact personnel hiring across the gender divide.

The authors present the findings of a research study that aimed to investigate the ways in which gender differences in personality scores influence hiring rates between females and males. On the basis of their findings, the authors conclude that it is necessary to use broad selection criteria to address gender disparities in organizations. One such criterion is the Five Factor Model, which focuses on broad traits that are observable in both genders. Key Term: Performance and Personality Testing Definition: According to Satterlee (2009), performance test are tools " used to evaluate performance on specific tasks that will be carried out on the job." In this regrd, personality tests help to assess or measure an individual's personality traits such as degree of autonomy or extroversion.

These characteristics vary across the gender divide and influence hiring trends in organizations. Discussion Perhaps it is time the advocates of gender equality and equity used a different approach to advance their cause. May be the gender disparities observed in social institutions are not the discriminate working of patriarchy and male chauvinism, after all. It is expected that employers would need to select the best from among the many job applicants who seek employment. This goal is reflected in the way hiring criteria are designed to bring aboard only those individuals who

posses the desired qualifications, skills and traits as dictated by the job requirements.

However, the problem arises when a given hiring criteria seem to favor one gender over the other. For instance, the researchers found out that a hiring model that emphasizes facet-level traits such as agency- the tendency to act autonomously, favor men over women in job selection. In contrast, focusing on communion- a need to belong in a larger social group, tends to favor women over men (Powwell, Goffin & Gellatly, 2011). In this light, the researchers' findings suggest that the use of personality scores to determine individuals' qualification for certain job functions could inadvertently discriminate against one gender over the other. Although the use of the Five Factor Model is relatively impartial since it focuses on traits that are common to both genders, it still is not the surest way to ensure gender parity. It does not provide checks to avoid disparities in case individuals from one gender out-perform their opposite members even on traits that are generally common to both.

For instance, although FFM traits like extroversion and conscientiousness are generally deemed to be common across the gender divide compared to facet-level traits like agency, it is likely that men will exhibit such qualities more than women given their assertive nature. In addition, professions that are regarded as masculine in nature such as engineering may automatically favor men over women. Not surprisingly, the researchers identified the study's focus on a single work context as one of its major weaknesses. In this regard, future studies should focus on different work contexts to draw more

representative conclusions regarding the effect of gender differences in

personality tests on hiring rates.