NARCISSISM AND SELECTION DECISIONS: DO NARCISSISTS SELECT

NARCISSISTS?

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ABSTRACT

The present study was concerned with understanding the extent to which a bias such as the similar-to-me effect played a role in predicting hiring decisions when considering rater-ratee narcissism and rater personality factors. There were three research questions generated prior to gathering data: (1) are narcissists more likely to be selected than non-narcissists?; (2) are narcissists more likely to select narcissists in an interview setting?; and (3) are other personality factors predictive of decisions to hire narcissists? To answer these questions, data was collected from 121 respondents (65% male, 35% female) with an average age of 35 ($SD = 9.74$). Regarding research question one, data indicated that lower levels of candidate narcissism were associated with being selected overall. For research question two, results indicated that higher levels of narcissism predicted decisions to hire narcissists. Concerning the third research question, results indicated that higher levels of conscientiousness and agreeableness were negatively associated with decisions to hire narcissists. Limitations and suggestions for future research are discussed.

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Introduction

The field of Industrial/Organizational (I/O) psychology has long been concerned with optimally selecting the individuals to fill the right positions within organizations. Of all the methods by which individuals are selected, the employment interview is one of the more common selection methods (Powell, Stanley, & Brown, 2018). However, interviews often suffer from rater bias (Sears & Rowe, 2003). Rater bias can be observed when there are disagreements among raters on interpretations of rating scales or perceptions of individuals (Hoyt, W.T., 2000). Such biases may be influenced by stereotypes related to attributes of a candidate such as race, age, or demeanor that are unrelated to the knowledge, skills, or abilities (KSAs) needed for the job. One such bias that may have an influence on hiring decisions is known as the "similar-to-me" effect.

Sears and Rowe (2003) suggest that the "similar-to-me" effect leads to more favorable perceptions of individuals that are similar based on surface-level characteristics, such as attitudes (e.g., Baskett, 1973; Griffitt & Jackson, 1970; Peters & Terborg, 1975) biographical attributes (e.g., Rand & Wexley, 1975), and race (e.g., Lin, Dobbins, & Fahr, 1992). Graves and Powell (1988) also found that recruiters favored individuals who were similar to themselves. In other words, people often make positive associations with those who are like themselves. Since research suggests that personality traits are exhibited and guide behaviors in the workplace (Harari, Rudolph, & Laginess, 2014), one can argue that personality of raters will also affect their decisions in interview

settings (Podsakoff et al., 2011). As such, varying personality constructs could lead to bias in the interviews. It would stand to reason that people who think very highly of themselves and their abilities may also favor individuals who think highly of themselves. The case could be that interviewers with narcissistic tendencies provide more favorable interview ratings to others who have similar tendencies. If this does occur, there could be considerable negative outcomes for organizations. The interview process may be particularly subject to rater bias because displaying certain narcissistic behaviors (e.g., high confidence) in that context is considered beneficial (Paulhus et al., 2013). This study seeks to identify the extent to which narcissistic individuals select others who are similar to themselves in an interview setting.

Biases in Selection

A bias is defined as "partiality or an inclination or predisposition for or against something" (American Psychological Association, APA Dictionary of Psychology, n.d.). Rater bias can be observed when there is a lack of agreement among raters on how rating scales should be interpreted (Hoyt, W.T., 2000). In this case, one or more raters could drastically differ on ratings compared to the majority because not everyone understands the rating instrument (Hoyt, W.T., 2000). Rater bias can also occur when one or more raters have unique reactions to individuals, which leads to ratings reflecting irrelevant characteristics (Hoyt, W.T., 2000). Most research has focused on three types of biases: leniency, severity, and halo (Dewberry et al., 2013; Hoyt, W.T., 2000; Murphy et al., 1993). These are important to consider as they introduce bias and unfairness in a rating process (Dewberry, 2013). Leniency error occurs when raters give unwarranted high

scores compared to other raters (Dewberry et al., 2013). An example of this would concern an individual who provides substantially higher ratings for all job candidates in an interview (e.g., fives on a five-point scale), or consistently provides favorable ratings on all interview question responses compared to other raters. In contrast, severity encompasses the opposite tendency—providing ratings substantially lower than other raters (Hoyt, W.T., 2000). For example, if the mean score for a candidate among most raters is a four on a scale from one to five, a rater who consistently gives scores of a two would be exhibiting severity error. Halo error is a type of bias that occurs when a rater forms an overall impression of a ratee before assigning a rating (Viswesvaran, et all, 2005). The impression formed may taint the actual ratings and may overlap among raters or be unique to a single individual (Viswesvaran, et al., 2005). For example, if a job candidate were to perform very well on an initial interview question the raters may (consciously or subconsciously) have a propensity to rate other responses higher despite actual performance. Regarding interview settings, each of the aforementioned biases may very well contribute to ratings based on similarities the interviewer may share with the interviewee.

Personality and Rater Bias

Research has shown that certain personality traits can impact the biases one may exhibit. For example, Sears and Rowe (2003) examined conscientiousness in an interview setting, and the extent to which raters high in conscientiousness favored candidates who seemed similar on that characteristic. Conscientiousness is often exhibited by traits such as dependability, thoroughness, and achievement orientation (Costa & McCrae, 1992). A

highly conscientious individual likely pays close attention to detail, is consistently reliable, and holds a high standard for work-related tasks (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Sears and Rowe (2003) found that raters high in conscientiousness favored highly conscientious candidates more highly than candidates low in conscientiousness. However, the authors found no significant difference when examining low conscientious raters' decisions—these raters did not differentiate between candidates low or high in conscientiousness. Although Sears and Rowe (2003) contributed to the personality in selection literature, the study did have limitations. For example, the study only focused on a singular personality trait and also only utilized male participants. The study also may be subject to error when considering those high in conscientiousness may be better judges of candidate applicability. This could occur because of the propensity for conscientious raters to be more thorough and dependable (Costa & McCrae, 1992). This study seeks to expand upon Sears and Rowe by examining the extent to which a personality process such as narcissism (as well as other personality factors) affects ratings.

Although some research has addressed interviewer personality and its effect on ratings (Hilliard & Macan, 2009; Unsal & Turetgen, 2013), there is limited research concerning narcissistic characteristics of interviewers and how they affect decision-making. The narcissistic tendencies of interviewers could manifest directly and indirectly. A direct implication of narcissistic tendencies is that more narcissistic interviewers may ask legally questionable and non-job relevant questions deemed unanswerable during an interview (Highhouse, Nye, & Zhang, 2019). For example, narcissism is a significant predictor or the likelihood to ask questions such as "estimate how many windows are in New York" (Highhouse et al., 2019, p. 311) during a job interview. A possible indirect

result of interviewer's narcissistic tendencies is that candidates who demonstrate narcissistic tendencies could be seen more favorably than candidates who do not (Highhouse et al., 2019).

Narcissism

To fully understand the potential impact of narcissism on rater bias in selection, one must understand the motivations and machinations of narcissists. Narcissism is characterized by an inflated sense of dominance, exhibitionism, self-confidence, entitlement, vanity, and superiority (Koterba, Ponti, and Ligman, 2020). Narcissists are more likely to self-promote (Paulhus et al., 2013) and frequently over-exaggerate their competencies and positive qualities through bragging. Narcissists are immensely focused on success and power, and often seek attention and admiration from others (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). Narcissism is interesting to many people, perhaps because many have encountered a boss, significant other, or friend who seems self-centered and constantly needs gratification from external sources. In order to determine the extent to which these characteristics may influence the interview process, it is important to examine this highly complex construct.

Morf and Rhodewalt (2001) assert that the study of narcissism is subject to poor construct validity because of its complexity. In order to address this, the authors introduced a theoretical framework that includes both trait-level and social-cognitive-affective characteristics to elucidate narcissism. Narcissists tend to exhibit characteristics of self-importance and consider others to be inferior, which falls under the category of grandiosity (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). What is seemingly contradictory is that these

individuals also crave attention and have a desire to be well-admired by others (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). The authors go on to mention that although this is seemingly paradoxical, it is likely because narcissists' self-assessment of themselves is not grounded in reality. This leads them to seek out positive feedback from others in order to maintain this crucial self-concept (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). With much of narcissism research alluding to it as a negative characteristic, its role in organizational contexts is worth consideration.

What is interesting to the field of I/O psychology are the effects of narcissism in the workplace. In an organizational context, the focus is on subclinical levels of narcissism as they exist within the normal population. Grijalva and Harms (2014) mention that organizational research should focus on those who have levels of narcissism that are non-debilitating. This is because high levels of narcissism encompass excessive need for admiration, entitlement, and a lack of empathy (Diamond et al., 2011). Research has shown that although narcissistic CEOs take greater risks, their organizations' performance is not better or worse than their non-narcissistic competition (Chatterjee & Hambrick, 2007). Similarly, O'boyle et al.'s meta-analysis (2011) found that although higher levels of narcissism are associated with counter-productivity, it did not predict job performance. Despite narcissism's low relationship with performance, its effect on the organization and its members is worth consideration. This is because there are many aspects besides performance that may affect nontangible outcomes, such as employee emotions and workplace behaviors.

Narcissism has been shown to negatively affect other organizational members. Braun et al. (2018) found that leader narcissism impacts negative follower emotions, which may cause more supervisory-targeted counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs). The authors also posit that narcissistic leadership can be detrimental to organizational functioning in general. Narcissists are more likely to ascend to executive-level positions and also engage in exploitative behaviors like cheating and even fraud (Grijalva & Harms, 2014). Even though narcissistic leaders can sometimes help organizations thrive because of their bold vision (Braun et al., 2018), they lack empathy and often take credit for work for which they shared very little responsibility. They also are more likely to cause harm the organizations and individuals that comprise them (Grijalva & Harms, 2014). Given that narcissists are more prone to rise to leadership positions (Grijalva & Harms, 2014), it can be argued that these leaders will play a key role in selecting and interviewing potential candidates. Although some past research has been conducted concerning personality of interviewers (Hilliard & Macan, 2009; Türetgen et al., 2017), there is a gap in the literature concerning narcissistic raters. Specifically, what has yet to be studied is the effect that narcissism has on selecting job applicants. Before delving further into the implications of narcissism in selection, a brief discussion of the employment interview follows.

Interviews

The employment interview is defined as "an interaction conducted to determine the qualifications of a given individual for a particular open position" (Huffcutt & Youngcourt, 2007, p. 182). It is one of the most commonly used methods for selecting

applicants who wish to work in an organization (Powell, Stanley, & Brown, 2018) and has been well-utilized and extremely popular for the past 100 years (Levashina et al., 2014). Its range of use varies from an initial applicant screening to the final hurdle that a potential employee must undertake to be hired (Levashina et al., 2014). Employment interviews have become so prevalent that it is hard to imagine being considered for a work position without participating in one (Huffcutt & Culbertson, 2010).

Given the popularity and high use of interviews in employment settings, the types of interviews and associated validities have been of interest to researchers since 1949 (Levashina et al., 2014). In this regard, structured interviews are more reliable and valid than unstructured interviews (Conway et al., 1995; Huffcutt & Arthur, 1994; Huffcutt, et al., 2004; Huffcutt et al., 2014; Hunter & Hunter, 1984; McDaniel et al, 1994). McDaniel et al.'s (1994) and Huffcutt and Arthur's (2014) meta-analyses succinctly summarize the literature on interview validity and assert that structured interviews consistently lead to more valid selection decisions. However, another factor worth considering is the type of structured interview and its components. The two most-utilized structured interview formats are the behavior description interview (BDI) and the situational interview (SI) introduced by Campion et al. (1997). Culbertson et al. (2017) posit that SI questions elicit planned intentions that will predict future action. Such questions ask the applicant what they would do in a given situation.

BDI questions consist of items asking interviewees about a specific situation in the past in which they elicited a behavior—under the logic that past behavior predicts future behavior (Culbertson et al., 2017; Janz, 1982). A recent meta-analysis (Culbertson

et al., 2017) regarding the validity of both types of structured interview methods suggest

that SIs show evidence for slightly higher mean validity (0.23) than BDIs (.18).

However, such validities have been found to be greatly influenced by job complexity

(Huffcutt et al., 2004). Research suggests that job complexity decreased validity for SIs

when the job was complex, whereas BDIs validity coefficients were not affected by job

complexity (Huffcutt et al., 2004). This indicates that for complex jobs, utilizing BDIs

may be a better choice for a selection tool. Although BDI and SI interviews show ample

evidence for validity, the effect of personality factors, such as narcissism, in such settings

has not been fully examined.

Narcissism in Interviews

Regarding its role in interviews, narcissism appears to lead to more favorable job

ratings when compared to non-narcissists (Grijalva & Harms, 2014). This is likely

because narcissists are avid self-promoters who excel in over-exaggerating their

experiences (Paulhus et al., 2013). It is also likely that narcissists crave positive feedback

that reinforces and/or supports their competencies. For example, Zhu and Chen (2014)

found that highly narcissistic CEOs tend to favor directors who are similarly narcissistic.

The authors suggest this is because new directors are so highly supportive of the CEO's

decisions, who are then supported by the CEO—thus creating a cyclical process of

reinforcement. In this vein, a narcissist may not actually like another narcissist because

of their similar personality. The favorability might be based on the likelihood that

behavior will be reinforced through support—regardless of personality. However, the

personality measures in Zhu and Chen (2014) were based on unobtrusive indicators of

personality (namely ads in which the CEOs appeared) and therefore warrants further empirical research.

From an interviewer standpoint, Brunell et al. (2018) found that even trained raters perceived narcissistic individuals as group leaders. This indicates that narcissists may indeed be selected more often than those low in narcissism, despite training of an interviewer. Also, research has supported the notion that narcissism leads to popularity at first sight, but that the traits that were perceived as attractive initially were maladaptive later on (Back et al., 2010). In the context that the interview often occurs as one of the first steps regarding an employee's tenure, one could expect a narcissist to be chosen over a non-narcissist (e.g., Grijalva & Harms, 2014). Additionally, this effect could occur despite training focused on accurately perceiving candidates (Brunell et al., 2018).

Recall the "similar-to-me" effect briefly discussed earlier and that it applies to surface level characteristics such as race, gender, or attitudes. The study of this concept and its relation to narcissism is important to the field of I/O psychology because the "similar-to-me" effect can impact hiring decisions. As will be discussed later, most research on the similar-to-me effect shows that likenesses in racial, biographical, and attitudinal characteristics lead to more favorable interview outcomes (Prewett-Livingston et al., 1995; Sears & Rowe, 2003). Since narcissistic responses are seemingly encouraged in an interview setting (Paulhus et al., 2013), the extent to which higher levels of narcissism lead to more favorable ratings could significantly impact hiring decisions and organizations as a whole. This is especially important given that interview settings are

designed for candidates to exhibit tendencies usually considered to be narcissistic (Ellis, et al., 2002).

Self-Promotion in Interviews

The employment interview creates an environment in which candidates feel the need to present themselves in a manner that could be viewed as narcissistic (Ellis et al., 2002). These behaviors include boasting about one's accomplishments, praising one's own skills, and exhibiting confidence (Paulhus et al., 2013). In this atmosphere, interviewees use self-promotion in an attempt to impress the interviewer with their competence rather than attractiveness (Ellis et al., 2002). Self-promotion involves both self-praise and self-enhancement, whereas self-praise is demonstrated by bragging about one's positive attributes and talents that does not require embellishment (Ellis et al., 2002; Paulhus et al., 2013). In contrast, self-enhancement encompasses an exaggeration of one's competencies and often involves taking responsibility of others' accomplishments (Paulhus et al., 2013). During interviews, self-promotion regarding past experiences, skills, accomplishments, and competence is necessary to demonstrate one has the qualifications to perform a job (Paulhus et al., 2013). Research has shown that those who self-promote are given higher interviewer ratings than those who do not self-promote (Ellis et al., 2002). This suggests that individuals who come across as more narcissistic are preferred over those who are less narcissistic.

Similar-to-Me Effect

The effect of similarity between individuals and its varying implications have received ample attention in psychological literature (Buss, D., 1985; Youyou et al.,

2017). For example, there is clear evidence that friends and individuals in close relationships are similar on a variety of variables (Buss, D., 1985; Rushton & Bons, 2005). Regarding spouses, the factors that are most similar between individuals concern age, ethnicity, religion, race, and socioeconomic status (Buss, D., 1985). In general, people tend to like others that are similar to themselves (Sears & Rowe, 2003). However, most of the similarities between those in close relationships have to do with surface-level characteristics mentioned above. Research concerning personality similarities has been mixed. Much of the literature suggests that there is little or no personality similarity between individuals in close relationships (Altmann, Sierau, & Roth, 2013; Anderson, Keltner, & John, 2003; Beer, Watson, & McDade-Montez, 2013; Botwin, Buss, & Shackelford, 1997; Buss, 1984a; Funder, Kolar, & Blackman, 1995; Rushton & Bons, 2005; Watson, Beer, & McDade-Montez, 2014; Watson, Hubbard, & Wiese, 2000a; Watson et al., 2004). However, Youyou et al. (2017) found personality similarities regarding people in close relationships, when correcting for reference group effects. Concerning similarities in interview scenarios, research on the similar-to-me effect has mirrored findings in similarity research.

As previously mentioned, the similar-to-me effect occurs when individuals are viewed in terms of similar demographics, such as age, race, or attitudes (Sears & Rowe, 2003). At a basic level, perceiving others as similar may elicit a view that they are favored more than those who are different (Sears & Rowe, 2003). Like the literature concerning similarities, most research on the similar-to-me effect shows that likenesses in racial, biographical, and attitudinal characteristics lead to more favorable interview outcomes for a candidate (Prewett-Livingston et al., 1995; Sears & Rowe, 2003). There

have been numerous proposed explanations for this effect. According to the theory of interpersonal attraction, similarity increases the likelihood that another will mirror and therefore validate one's personal characteristics, views, or opinions (Frank & Hackman, 1975). In turn, this leads to more favorable ratings of the person who his similar. Cahn (1976) elucidates that there exists a "self-validation" model. Within this model, the applicant and interviewer reinforce each other's self-concept, leading to feelings of personal validation for both parties. The similar-to-me effect may have implications in selection because it could lead to increased bias based on non-job-relevant characteristics.

Narcissism, Similar-to-me Effect, and Rater Bias

Recall that narcissistic individuals negatively affect organizations in a variety of ways (Koterba et al., 2020; Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). Since research suggests they are more likely to be selected than other individuals low in narcissism (Grijalva & Harms, 2014), the extent to which rater narcissism affects hiring decisions is of interest in the current research. This is especially important when considering the effect that similarity plays in relation to the employment interview—namely through the similar-to-me effect. Although this effect typically occurs when individuals are viewed in terms of similar demographics, such as age, race, or attitudes (Sears & Rowe, 2003), the role of personality should be considered because of the potential for bias based on similar personality factors. The purpose of this research is to discern the extent to which narcissism and other personality factors affect hiring decisions when considering the similar-to-me effect in a structured interview setting.

Research Questions

1. Are narcissists more likely to be selected than non-narcissists?

2. Are narcissists more likely to select narcissists in an interview setting?

3. Are other personality factors predictive of decisions to hire narcissists?

Method

Participants

130 participants were recruited utilizing Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk). MTurk is a software platform that pays varying monetary amounts to individuals for taking surveys associated with research. Data was obtained from 130 participants who met the requirements of being 18 years of age or older. Seven participants were not included in the study because of failed manipulation checks that were designed as part of the survey. Two other participants were not included because they selected the option "My data should not be included in analysis". The resulting sample size was 121. The average age of participants was approximately 35 years ($SD = 9.74$). Approximately 65% of participants identified as male, and 35% identified as female. 71.1% of participants were white, 18.2% were Asian/Pacific Islander, 4.1% were African American, 4.1% were Hispanic/Latino, and 2.5% were Native American/Alaskan Native. Ninety-four percent of participants were employed and held jobs in a wide variety of industries from customer support to executive management. Participants also worked an average 40.44 hours per week ($SD = 14.61$), and had previously conducted an average of 3.98 interviews ($SD = 2.71$) during the past five years. At the completion of the survey,

MTurk participants received a code to enter on the MTurk website confirming completion and were paid $3.00.

Design, procedure, and materials

Each participant was given the following description of the study: "You will be asked about your familiarity with interviewing, then proceed to take surveys regarding individual differences and general knowledge. You will then read through structured interviews for three applicants, then make a hiring decision. The whole activity should take about 1-2 hours." Participants then were required to enter their age to verify that all participants were adults (18 or older). Participants then answered three questions regarding interview experiences, then proceeded to complete two measures of narcissism, the Narcissistic Personality Inventory-40 (NPI-40) and Grandiose Narcissism Scale (GNS). Participants then completed the HEXACO personality inventory and a distractor trivia task. For the final portion of the survey, participants read through three structured interviews of three candidates that exhibited low, medium, and high levels of narcissism. Each candidate was rated on levels of narcissism and response quality, then a selection decision was made.

Narcissism. Narcissism was measured using the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (displayed in Appendix A) developed by Raskin and Terry (1988) which measures seven sub-dimensions of narcissism. These include entitlement, superiority, self-sufficiency, authority, exhibitionism, vanity, and exploitativeness. Previous research has shown consistent reliability estimates (full-scale = .85, exploitativeness = .56, entitlement = .52, exhibitionism =.65, vanity = .68, superiority = .58, self-sufficiency

=.36, authority = .73) and has been used in varying populations (Crowe et al., 2016; Foster et al., 2015). Each item on the scale consisted of a forced choice response between one that was narcissistic, such as "If I ruled the world it would be a better place", and a response that was not narcissistic, such as "I am not good at influencing people". Final scores were calculated on a continuous scale from 0 (low narcissism) to 40 (high narcissism). This study found that the reliability estimate for the overall scale was acceptable, but the subscales did not meet conventional reliability standards (full-scale = .91, exploitativeness = .64, entitlement = .53, exhibitionism =.76, vanity = .68, superiority = .58, self-sufficiency =.50, authority = .81).

Narcissism was also measured using the Grandiose Narcissism Scale developed by Foster et al. (2015). This scale consisted of items measuring self-sufficiency, superiority, vanity, exhibitionism, entitlement, and exploitativeness. Unlike the NPI-40, a six-point Likert scale was used for each item. For example, on the item "I deserve to get what I want", participants selected the degree to which the statement was representative of their personality from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). Previous research on the Grandiose Narcissism Scale has found good reliabilities for the GNS and the GNS subscales (full-scale = .91, exploitativeness = .85, entitlement = .76, exhibitionism =.86, vanity = .86, superiority = .78, self-sufficiency =.76, authority = .87) and has been used in varying populations (Crowe et al., 2016; Foster et al., 2015). This study found acceptable reliability estimates for the GNS (full-scale = .97, exploitativeness = .94, entitlement = .87, exhibitionism =.90, vanity = .93, superiority = .88, self-sufficiency =.80, authority = .90). For analyses, both the NPI-40 and the Grandiose Narcissism Scale

were examined separately to discern whether there were in differences between the rating scales and the effect on the overall analysis model.

      Personality. In order to measure other personality characteristics, the HEXACO-60 (Appendix C) developed by Lee and Ashton was administered to participants. The HEXACO-60 measures six factors of personality to include honesty-humility, emotionality, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. Participants responded to each statement using a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) Likert scale. Example items include "I would be quite bored to visit an art gallery" and "I rarely hold a grudge, even against people who have badly wronged me." Previous research on the HEXACO has found acceptable reliability estimates (honesty =. 83, emotionality = .81, extraversion = .84, agreeableness = .82, conscientiousness = .81, openness = .80. This study found slightly lower reliability estimates (honesty =.70, emotionality = .66, extraversion = .65, agreeableness = .66, conscientiousness = .77, openness = .71).

      Distractor Task. To alleviate any carry-over effects from the personality assessment and the narcissism scales, a distractor measure was included prior to the final part of the study. It consisted of a trivia test covering random content (Appendix D). Example questions included "What is the average lifespan for an African elephant in the wild?" and "How many stories tall is the Empire State Building?" No analysis was pursued based on the data collected, as it was used as a cognitive distraction to separate personality inventories from the primary task of reading structured interviews for the final stimulus task.

Narcissism Interview Responses. To assess how participants rated varying levels of applicant responses in an interview, interview responses were created. The interview responses were developed for three job candidates with low, medium, and high narcissistic interview responses. Scripts for the three varying levels of narcissism were developed by utilizing archival data from Kausel et al. (2015). In their study, participants were primed to behave in a high narcissistic, low narcissistic, or neutral narcissistic manner. Participants in the Kausel study were randomly assigned to either a high, low, or control narcissism condition. Those in the high condition read a description providing information of how high narcissists act, such as being bold or having high authority. Those in the low condition were provided descriptions concerning acting humbly, learning from criticism, and helping others. The term narcissism was never explicitly mentioned in the high or low condition because narcissism is often viewed in a negative connotation. Those in the neutral condition were provided no priming information. Participants from the high and low conditions were then asked to write about a situation in which they exhibited similar behaviors mirroring the descriptions given. Participants in the neutral category were asked to write about a situation in which others were involved and they behaved in a manner they would typically behave.

With permission from authors of Kausel et al. (2015), data from the aforementioned responses was provided to help develop the high, medium, and low narcissistic interview responses as stimuli for this study. Twelve total statements were created from the data that elicited four high, four neutral, and four low narcissistic behaviors. A key for this measure was developed utilizing expert ratings from psychology professors at Middle Tennessee State University (Appendix E). To obtain

evidence for face validity, each of the responses were reviewed by students ($n = 66$) in psychology classes at Middle Tennessee State University. Students were first given operational definitions of high, medium, and low narcissism then tasked with rating 12 statements and their opinion of the level of narcissism associated with the statement. Items were randomized, and the measure in its entirety can be found in Appendix E. Items were coded so that *Low* = 1, *Medium* = 2, and *High* = 3. Mean scores from participants on the items (Table 1) were compared to the coded key, then items were finalized and selected for each level of narcissism based on the lowest absolute differences for each level of narcissism, resulting in nine final items (three low, three medium, and three high). See Table 1 below.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Scores on Narcissism Stimulus Face Validity Study

Key	Mean	Standard Deviation	AD	N
Low 1	1.06	.34	.18*	66
Low 2	1.26	.48	.41	66
Low 3	1.22	.47	.39*	66
Low 4	1.10	.41	.23*	66
Medium 1	1.99	.56	.25*	66
Medium 2	1.56	.56	.50*	66
Medium 3	2.70	.68	.31*	66
Medium 4	2.26	.68	.53	66
High 1	2.66	.62	.40*	66
High 2	2.49	.66	.51*	66
High 3	2.60	.65	.46*	66
High 4	2.27	.76	.61	66

Note. *AD represents the average of the absolute deviation scores. *Indicates the final items that were used for the study based on lowest AD*

Behavioral interview questions were then developed for this study that applied to the varying levels of narcissistic responses. Thus, BDI questions were selected for this study, in part, because behaviors that have happened in past are likely to be easier for raters to infer personality characteristics, such as narcissism (similar to dominance), as opposed to descriptions of what applicants might do in a future situations (Culbertson et al., 2017; Janz, 1982). The Kausel et al., (2015) study also utilized past behaviors for applicant responses, providing the current researchers with content to be used in the present study. Final stimulus questions were written as follows: (1) Describe a time when you had to work with a team; (2) Describe a time when you had to deal with a situation at work that wasn't going well; (3) Describe a time when you had to make a difficult decision that affected others. The three levels of narcissistic responses were assigned to candidates with gender-neutral names to account for gender bias in responses. Low responses were assigned to Sam, medium responses to Kendall, and high responses to Morgan.

Survey Procedure. Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained through Middle Tennessee State University's IRB (Appendix G). Data was collected utilizing Qualtrics survey software. The survey was posted to the MTurk website in accordance with procedures and directions available. After selecting the link to take the survey, participants were required to read through the informed consent (Appendix H) which described a disguised purpose of the study and manipulation check requirements. Participants then input their MTurk worker ID in order to obtain credit. Next, participants took the NPI-40, GNS, and HEXACO-PI-R.

Interview Task. The order in which participants viewed each candidate was randomized to account for potential response biases. Participants read the three interview questions (Appendix F) for each candidate and rated each interview answer on a scale from 1 (*low*) to 10 (*high*) on the seven dimensions of narcissism: authority, vanity, exhibitionism, exploitativeness, entitlement, self-sufficiency, and superiority. Ratings from 1 (*low*) to 10 (*high*) were also given for the HEXACO-PI-R dimensions of honesty-humility, emotionality, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience. Participants then rated the candidate's overall performance from 1 (*poor*) to 10 (*excellent*), then were asked how likely they would be to hire the candidate on a scale from 1 (*very unlikely*) to 10 (*very likely*). After reading through each candidate's complete interview, the participants were then provided reminders concerning the overall performance ratings chosen between the candidates and made their final hiring decision. Finally, participants were asked if they took the study seriously and forwarded to a debriefing statement (Appendix I).

Results

Manipulation Check. Table 2 shows scale descriptives and intercorrelations among variables for this study. For a manipulation check of the developed narcissistic responses of the candidates, one-way repeated measures ANOVAs were conducted to compare the effect of scripted candidate narcissism on participants' perceived ratings of narcissism on the three structured interview questions. Descriptive statistics for narcissism ratings based on the scripted interview responses can be found in Table 3 below. For interview question one, there was a significant effect of scripted narcissism on

participants' ratings, Wilks' Lambda = .80, F (2, 119) = 14.81, p <.001. Significant

effects were also found for question two Wilks' Lambda = .64, F (2, 119) = 34.16, p

<.001 and question three Wilks' Lambda = .63, F (2, 119) = 34.36, p <.001. Post-hoc

pairwise comparisons indicate that Sam (low narcissism) was rated lower than Kendall

(medium narcissism), who was rated lower than Morgan (high narcissism) on all

interview questions. See Table 4 below for pairwise comparisons. The results indicate

that each of the scripted candidate responses accurately reflected intended levels of

narcissism, and that participants rated each candidate appropriately on this metric.

Table 2

Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations among variables

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Emotionality	3.08	0.57									
2. Honesty	3.18	0.63	-.04								
3. Extraversion	3.21	0.58	-.40**	.02							
4. Agreeableness	3.22	0.60	-.01	.45**	.25*						
5.Conscientiousness	3.36	0.68	-.13	.61*	.14	.36**					
6. Openness	3.36	0.62	-.21*	.31**	.20*	.24**	.44**				
7. GNS	3.59	0.89	.02	-.68**	.21*	-.34**	-.60**	-.26**			
8. NPI	17.57	9.23	-.13	-.59**	.20*	-.36**	-.54**	-.31**	.77**		
9. Final Hire	1.63	0.73	-.01	-.29**	-.00	-.30**	-.39**	-.21*	.44**	.48**	
10. Gender	1.36	0.48	.13	.15	.07	-.05	.213*	.02	-.06	-.16	-.07

Note. *M* and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively.
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics for Narcissism Ratings Based on Scripted Narcissistic Responses

Response	Question	Mean	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Sam (L)	1	4.54	4.03	5.05
	2	4.29	3.79	4.79
	3	4.22	3.71	4.74
Kendall (M)	1	5.05	4.60	5.50
	2	5.76	5.29	6.23
	3	6.14	5.70	6.59
Morgan (H)	1	6.09	5.66	6.52
	2	6.82	6.40	7.24
	3	6.89	6.49	7.30

Note: L = Low Narcissism; M = Medium Narcissism, H = High Narcissism

Table 4
Sidak Pairwise Comparisons for the Narcissism Ratings between Candidates

(I)	(J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	95% CI	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Question 1				
Sam (L)	Kendall (M)	-1.92*	-2.60	-1.24
Sam (L)	Morgan (H)	-2.67*	-3.46	-1.88
Kendall (M)	Morgan (H)	-0.75*	-1.30	-0.20
Question 2				
Sam (L)	Kendall (M)	-1.47*	-2.13	-.81
Sam (L)	Morgan (H)	-2.53*	-3.27	-1.79
Kendall (M)	Morgan (H)	-1.06*	-1.69	-0.43
Question 3				
Sam (L)	Kendall (M)	-1.92*	-2.47	-1.36
Sam (L)	Morgan (H)	-2.67*	-3.31	-2.03
Kendal (M)	Morgan (H)	-0.75*	0.30	1.20

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level
Note: L = Low Narcissism; M = Medium Narcissism, H = High Narcissism

Research Question 1: Are narcissists more likely to be selected than non-narcissists?

See Tables 5 and 6 below for descriptive and frequency statistics for candidate performance ratings (*CP*) and likelihood to hire (*LH*), respectively. To assess research question 1, percentages of overall candidate performance and hiring decisions were examined. Results indicate that lower levels of narcissism were associated with a higher likelihood for being selected. Approximately 52% of participants chose to hire Sam, the candidate that exhibited the lowest level of narcissism in interview question responses. Approximately 33% of participants chose the candidate (Kendall) with moderately narcissistic responses, while approximately 15% chose to hire the candidate with the high levels of narcissism in the interview responses (Morgan).

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for Candidate Performance (CP) and Likelihood to Hire (LH)

	Mean	*Standard Deviation*	*N*
Sam CP	7.88	1.58	121
Sam LH	7.92	1.58	121
Kendall CP	6.71	1.77	121
Kendall LH	6.57	2.29	121
Morgan CP	6.25	2.29	121
Morgan LH	5.94	2.64	121

Table 6

Frequency Statistics for Final Hiring Decision

	Frequency	*Percent*	*Valid %*	*Cumulative Percent*
Sam (L)	63	52.1	52.1	52.1
Kendall (M)	40	33.1	33.1	85.1
Morgan (H)	18	14.9	14.9	100.0

Note: L = Low Narcissism; M = Medium Narcissism, H = High Narcissism

Research Question 2: Are narcissists more likely to select narcissists in an interview setting?

A cumulative odds ordinal logistic regression analysis was conducted utilizing the NPI-40[1]. Parallel lines analyses were included, and the results met the assumption that the relationships between the predictor and the logits are the same for all logits. The predictor variable was tested *a priori* to verify the assumption of no multicollinearity was not violated. The odds of narcissistic participants selecting narcissistic candidates was 1.13 (95% CI, 1.01 to 1.10) times that for non-narcissistic participants, Wald χ^2 (1) = 24.38 p <.001. Higher scores in participant narcissism were positively associated with the selection of narcissistic candidates. Narcissists *were* more likely to select narcissists. Results from the ordinal logistic regression analysis can be found in Table 7.

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[1] Analyses were conducting utilizing both NPI-40 and GNS scales. Results were functionally equivalent, so the NPI-40 analysis is presented.

Table 7

Ordinal Logistic Regression: NPI-40 Predictor of Hiring Decisions

Predictor Variable	B (*SE*)	Wald's χ^2	*p* value	Odds ratio [95% CI]
NPI-40	.13(.03)	24.38	<.001*	1.13[1.08 – 1.10]

$*p < .001$

Research Question 3: Are other personality factors predictive of decisions to hire narcissists?

Further ordinal logistic regression analysis was conducted to determine the extent to which other personality factors measured with the HEXACO-PI-R-60 were predictive of hiring decisions. Parallel lines analyses were included, and the results met the assumption that the relationships between the predictor and the logits are the same for all logits. There were no observed main effects for emotionality (Wald's χ^2 (1) = .06, *p* =.802), honesty (Wald's χ^2 (1) = .01, *p* =.907), extraversion (Wald's χ^2 (1) = 1.55, *p* =.214), or openness (Wald's χ^2 (1) = .85, *p* =.356). However, the odds of participants with high levels of agreeableness selecting narcissistic candidates was 0.37 (95% CI 0.15 to 0.87) times lower than participants with low levels of agreeableness Wald's $\chi^2(1) = 5.20$, *p* =.023. The odds of participants with high levels of conscientiousness selecting narcissistic candidates was 0.32 (95% CI 0.15 to 0.70) times lower than participants with low levels of conscientiousness Wald's $\chi^2(1) = 8.21$, *p* =.004. In other words, individuals with higher levels of agreeableness and conscientiousness were *less* likely to select narcissistic candidates. See Table 8 below.

Table 8

Ordinal Logistic Regression: HEXACO-PI-R-60 Predictors of Hiring Decisions

Predictor Variable	B (*SE*)	Wald's χ^2	*p* value	Odds ratio [95% CI]
Emotionality	.11	.06	.802	1.11[0.49 – 2.52]
Honesty	.05	.01	.907	1.05[0.45 – 2.45]
Extraversion	.56	1.55	.214	1.75[0.72 – 4.24[
Agreeableness	-1.01	5.20	.023*	0.37[0.15 – 0.87]
Conscientiousness	-1.13	8.21	.004*	0.32[0.15 – 0.70]
Openness	-.36	.852	.356	0.70[0.32 – 1.50]

*$p < .05$

Discussion

The present study examined several questions relevant to the field of I/O

psychology. The first research question concerned the extent to which narcissists are

selected over their non-narcissistic counterparts. Results indicated that the candidate who

exhibited the lowest levels of narcissistic responses (Sam) was chosen by more than 50%

of all participants. This could be for several reasons. Sam's responses involved giving

credit to others ("*I gave the company thanks and appreciation*"), invoking collaboration

("*I let the team come to consensus on how they would like to use the money…*",) and

putting others first ("*I spent much of the meeting providing praise and acknowledgment

of the hard work of my staff*"). Such responses may be perceived as admirable and job-

relevant, but also indicate that individuals who value others above themselves are vastly

preferred to those who do not. This finding is relevant to both practitioners and

researchers.

Practically speaking, results from this study indicate that low levels of narcissistic responses may be beneficial in a structured interview setting. Although the interview setting serves as a conduit through which some may exhibit highly narcissistic behaviors, communicating the ability to show empathy, humility, and care for others may be highly desirable regardless of rater personality. From a research standpoint, previous findings (e.g., Paulhus et al., 2013, Highhouse et al., 2019) indicated narcissists are often selected more often than non-narcissists. Our findings are contrary to this, indicating higher narcissism in ratees may not be indicative of a decision to hire.

This study also examined the extent to which narcissists are likely to hire other narcissists. Results indicate that raters with higher levels of narcissism is predictive of decisions to hire narcissists. These findings contribute to the extant literature concerning personality of raters in an interview setting, and has various implication for both practitioners and academics. Of primary concern to decision-makers should be the extent to which narcissism is desired in the workplace. If an organization values teamwork, collaboration, and empathy, then narcissists would likely not fit within the desired culture. In such cases, potential interviewers could be given a narcissism inventory (NPI-40, GNS) and be selected as interviewers based on lower scores. This research suggests that those scoring low on narcissism will also select others low on narcissism. Conversely, if the organization values cut-throat competition, self-promotion, and superiority, screening for interviewers higher in narcissism may be beneficial. These findings are of relevance to researchers because of the sparse literature concerning rater narcissism, as well as the similar-to-me effect. The notion that the similar-to-me effect also has implications for personality should be considered. Although previous research

suggests that this is encapsulated via surface-level characteristics (Baskett, 1973; Griffitt & Jackson, 1970; Lin, Dobbins, & Fahr, 1992; Peters & Terborg, 1975; Rand & Wexley, 1975). Results from this study also indicate that similarities between raters and ratees in terms of narcissistic personality may play a key role selection decisions.

The final research question concerns other personality predictors of decisions to hire narcissists. Results indicate that rater conscientiousness and agreeableness were negatively associated with decisions to hire narcissists. In other words, highly conscientious and agreeable raters do not select narcissists. Similar to our findings regarding narcissists, there are various implications for practitioners and researchers. If it is the desire of the organization to avoid hiring narcissistic employees, screening potential interviewers for conscientiousness and agreeableness may be relevant and beneficial (aside from the other benefits of having conscientious and agreeable interviewers). This is because those scoring high on these personality factor were less likely to select narcissists. These findings also contribute to the research of personality in raters and its effect on hiring decisions. While previous research does suggest that rater conscientiousness has an effect on decision to hire others who are similar (Sears & Rowe, 2003), agreeableness of raters has not previously been addressed.

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

There were several limitations with the present study, the first of which concerns external validity. The study design implemented carefully scripted responses that were validated and designed to show low, moderate, and high narcissistic interview responses for three candidates. It is unlikely that much of this scenario will specifically apply to all

organizations. There will often be more than three candidates, interviews will happen in

real-time, and there the interview will probably consist of more than three questions.

This leaves several opportunities for future research. We suggest a replication of this

study utilizing video interviews instead of a written script in order to contribute a higher

degree of realism. It is also suggested that a more robust number of candidates be

utilized, and that more interview questions are incorporated into the study. Suggested

changes may increase external validity of the study and further contribute to the

literature.

Another limitation involves similarity in personality, primarily the HEXACO-PI-

R-60. While results suggest conscientiousness and agreeableness are negatively

associated with decisions to hire narcissists, we did not examine the extent to which

participants' personality factors predicted decisions to hire those who were similar. Since

all candidates were scripted to exhibit levels of narcissism, future research could focus on

responses that are reflective of honesty-humility, extraversion, conscientiousness,

emotionality, agreeableness, and openness to experience. Such studies could contribute

to academia and practitioners by further shedding light on the role that rater personality

plays in hiring decisions.

The recruitment and selection of participants is another potential limitation.

There has been recent concern over the differences between live participants and those

utilizing Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk) platform (Aruguete et al., 2019). Such

research suggests that MTurk participants are more likely to speed through surveys and

also fail attention checks compared to in-person participants (Aruguete et al., 2019).

Others suggest that there may be differences among responses between online MTurk samples because of a variety of factors, and that careful consideration should be taken to verify results are generalizable across in-person samples (Engle et al., 2020). Future research could replicate this study in a laboratory or academic setting and evaluate the extent to which this concern should be addressed.

The differences in reliability estimates for the NPI-40 and the GNS are also worth mentioning. Recall that the full-scale reliability estimates were very similar (.91 and .97, respectively). However, the reliability coefficients of the sub-scale dimensions were much higher in the GNS (exploitativeness = .94, entitlement = .87, exhibitionism =.90, vanity = .93, superiority = .88, self-sufficiency =.80, authority = .90) compared to the NPI-40 (exploitativeness = .56, entitlement = .52, exhibitionism =.65, vanity = .68, superiority = .58, self-sufficiency =.36, authority = .73). However, the ordinal logistic regression was conducted using the two measures separately, and both scales significantly predicted decisions to hire narcissists. It is recommended that more research examines these two scales in greater depth. Although the GNS was developed to be either a compliment *or* alternative to the NPI-40 (Foster et al., 2015), future research could help shed light on the benefits or detriments either scale.

Overall, results indicate that narcissism and its role in interviews affects hiring decisions in varying ways. Interviewee narcissism is negatively associated with hiring decisions, but interviewer narcissism is positively associated with decisions to hire narcissists. This study expanded on previous research by also focusing on other personality factors, and found that conscientiousness and agreeableness have also

negatively contribute to decisions to hire narcissists. It is hoped that future research will

help expand upon this by further illuminating the roles that various personality constructs

play in structured interview settings.

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Appendix A (NPI-40)

Instructions: There are forty paired statements below. For each, choose which one is

closest to your feelings. You may only select <u>one </u>of the two options.

1. A. I have a natural talent for influencing people.   B. I am not good at influencing people.

2. A. Modesty doesn't become me.   B. I am essentially a modest person.

3. A. I would do almost anything on a dare.   B. I tend to be a fairly cautious person.

4. A. When people compliment me I sometimes get embarrassed.   B. I know that I am good because everybody keeps telling me so.

5. A. The thought of ruling the world frightens the hell out of me.   B. If I ruled the world it would be a better place.

6. A. I can usually talk my way out of anything.   B. I try to accept the consequences of my behavior.

7. A. I prefer to blend in with the crowd.   B. I like to be the center of attention.

8. A. I will be a success.   B. I am not too concerned about success.

9. A. I am no better or worse than most people.   B. I think I am a special person.

10. A. I am not sure if I would make a good leader.   B. I see myself as a good leader.

11. A. I am assertive.   B. I wish I were more assertive.

12. A. I like to have authority over other people.   B. I don't mind following orders.

13. A. I find it easy to manipulate people.   B. I don't like it when I find myself manipulating people.

14. A. I insist upon getting the respect that is due me.   B. I usually get the respect that I deserve.

15. A. I don't particularly like to show off my body. | B. I like to show off my body.

16. A. I can read people like a book. | B. People are sometimes hard to understand.

17. A. If I feel competent I am willing to take responsibility for making decisions. | B. I like to take responsibility for making decisions.

18. A. I just want to be reasonably happy. | B. I want to amount to something in the eyes of the world.

19. A. My body is nothing special. | B. I like to look at my body.

20. A. I try not to be a show off. | B. I will usually show off if I get the chance.

21. A. I always know what I am doing. | B. Sometimes I am not sure of what I am doing.

22. A. I sometimes depend on people to get things done. | B. I rarely depend on anyone else to get things done.

23. A. Sometimes I tell good stories. | B. Everybody likes to hear my stories.

24. A. I expect a great deal from other people. | B. I like to do things for other people.

25. A. I will never be satisfied until I get all that I deserve. | B. I take my satisfactions as they come.

26. A. Compliments embarrass me. | B. I like to be complimented.

27. A. I have a strong will to power. | B. Power for its own sake doesn't interest me.

28. A. I don't care about new fads and fashions. | B. I like to start new fads and fashions.

29. A. I like to look at myself in the mirror. | B. I am not particularly interested in looking at myself in the mirror.

30. A. I really like to be the center of attention. | B. It makes me uncomfortable to be the center of attention.

31. A. I can live my life in any way I want to. | B. People can't always live their lives in terms of what they want.

32. A. Being an authority doesn't mean that much to me.   B. People always seem to recognize my authority.

33. A. I would prefer to be a leader.   B. It makes little difference to me whether I am a leader or not.

34. A. I am going to be a great person.   B. I hope I am going to be successful.

35. A. People sometimes believe what I tell them.   B. I can make anybody believe anything I want them to.

36. A. I am a born leader.   B. Leadership is a quality that takes a long time to develop.

37. A. I wish somebody would someday write my biography.   B. I don't like people to pry into my life for any reason.

38. A. I get upset when people don't notice how I look when I go out in public.   B. I don't mind blending into the crowd when I go out in public.

39. A. I am more capable than other people.   B. There is a lot that I can learn from other people.

40. A. I am much like everybody else.   B. I am an extraordinary person.

Appendix B (GNS)

Instructions: For the following statements, select the extent to which you agree or disagree with each. (1=strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)

Self-sufficiency

α = .77, M = 23.16, SD = 4.47

1. I don't rely on other people to get things done.

2. When something needs to be done, I do it on my own.

3. I get irritated when I have to depend on other people.

4. I don't like to depend on other people to do things.

5. I like to do things on my own.

Superiority

α = .78, M = 13.53, SD = 4.25

1. I'm more talented than most other people.

2. I'm better than other people at most things.

3. If it's just me versus another person, I almost always win.

4. I have more going for me than most people.

Vanity

α = .88, M = 21.55, SD = 5.35

1. I care about how good I look.

2. I try to look as attractive as possible when I leave the house.

3. Looking good is important to feeling good.

4. My looks are important to me.

5. I think it's important to look as good as possible.

Exhibitionism

α = .88, M = 13.47, SD = 5.79

1. I do things that grab people's attention.

2. I do things that get people to notice me.

3. I make myself the center of attention.

4. I can be a showoff.

5. I do things to get attention.

Entitlement

α = .77, M = 11.90, SD = 4.48

1. I expect to be treated better than average.

2. The level of treatment I expect is higher than what most other people expect.

3. I deserve to get what I want.

4. I deserve more out of life than other people.

Exploitativeness

α = .86, M = 10.61, SD = 5.32

1. I'll do whatever it takes to get ahead, even if it means some people get hurt.

2. If I have to take advantage of somebody to get what I want, so be it.

3. I can be pretty manipulative.

4. I'm willing to manipulate others to get what I want.

5. I've been known to use people to get what I want.

Appendix C (HEXACO-PI-R-60)

Instructions: Please carefully read the following statements and select the button that corresponds to your level of agreement with the statement. Please answer every statement, even if you are not completely sure of your response. (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)

1.   I would be quite bored by a visit to an art gallery.

2.   I plan ahead and organize things, to avoid scrambling at the last minute.

3.   I rarely hold a grudge, even against people who have badly wronged me.

4.   I feel reasonably satisfied with myself overall.

5.   I would feel afraid if I had to travel in bad weather conditions.

6.   I wouldn't use flattery to get a raise or promotion at work, even if I thought it would

succeed.

7.   I'm interested in learning about the history and politics of other countries.

8.   I often push myself very hard when trying to achieve a goal.

9.   People sometimes tell me that I am too critical of others.

10.   I rarely express my opinions in group meetings.

11.   I sometimes can't help worrying about little things.

12.   If I knew that I could never get caught, I would be willing to steal a million dollars.

13.   I would enjoy creating a work of art, such as a novel, a song, or a painting.

14.   When working on something, I don't pay much attention to small details.

15.   People sometimes tell me that I'm too stubborn.

16.   I prefer jobs that involve active social interaction to those that involve working alone.

17.   When I suffer from a painful experience, I need someone to make me feel comfortable.

18.   Having a lot of money is not especially important to me.

19.   I think that paying attention to radical ideas is a waste of time.

20. I make decisions based on the feeling of the moment rather than on careful thought.

21. People think of me as someone who has a quick temper.

22. On most days, I feel cheerful and optimistic.

23. I feel like crying when I see other people crying.

24. I think that I am entitled to more respect than the average person is.

25. If I had the opportunity, I would like to attend a classical music concert.

26. When working, I sometimes have difficulties due to being disorganized.

27. My attitude toward people who have treated me badly is "forgive and forget".

28. I feel that I am an unpopular person.

29. When it comes to physical danger, I am very fearful.

30. If I want something from someone, I will laugh at that person's worst jokes.

31. I've never really enjoyed looking through an encyclopedia.

32. I do only the minimum amount of work needed to get by.

33. I tend to be lenient in judging other people.

34. In social situations, I'm usually the one who makes the first move.

35. I worry a lot less than most people do.

36. I would never accept a bribe, even if it were very large.

37. People have often told me that I have a good imagination.

38. I always try to be accurate in my work, even at the expense of time.

39. I am usually quite flexible in my opinions when people disagree with me.

40. The first thing that I always do in a new place is to make friends.

41. I can handle difficult situations without needing emotional support from anyone else.

42. I would get a lot of pleasure from owning expensive luxury goods.

43.   I like people who have unconventional views.

44.   I make a lot of mistakes because I don't think before I act.

45.   Most people tend to get angry more quickly than I do.

46.   Most people are more upbeat and dynamic than I generally am.

47.   I feel strong emotions when someone close to me is going away for a long time.

48.   I want people to know that I am an important person of high status.

49.   I don't think of myself as the artistic or creative type.

50.   People often call me a perfectionist.

51.   Even when people make a lot of mistakes, I rarely say anything negative.

52.   I sometimes feel that I am a worthless person.

53.   Even in an emergency I wouldn't feel like panicking.

54.   I wouldn't pretend to like someone just to get that person to do favors for me.

55.   I find it boring to discuss philosophy.

56.   I prefer to do whatever comes to mind, rather than stick to a plan.

57.   When people tell me that I'm wrong, my first reaction is to argue with them.

58.   When I'm in a group of people, I'm often the one who speaks on behalf of the group.

59.   I remain unemotional even in situations where most people get very sentimental.

60.   I'd be tempted to use counterfeit money, if I were sure I could get away with it.

Appendix D

In this task, you will be asked to provide an answer for each of the 13 questions. In addition to your answer, you must indicate how confident you are with each estimate on a scale of 0% (not at all confident) to 100% (completely confident). You are asked to provide estimations for all questions, even if you have no clue.

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the average lifespan for an African elephant in the wild?   Years: _____

    How confident are you in your estimate?_____%

<div align="center">[SURVEY PAGE BREAK]</div>

2. In what year did the first *Star Wars* movie come out?   Year: _____

    How confident are you in your estimate?_____%

<div align="center">[SURVEY PAGE BREAK]</div>

3. How old was Elvis Presley when he died?   Age in Years: _____

    How confident are you in your estimate?_____%

<div align="center">[SURVEY PAGE BREAK]</div>

4. How many total Olympic medals has Michael Phelps won?   _____

    How confident are you in your estimate?_____%

<div align="center">[SURVEY PAGE BREAK]</div>

5. How many stories tall is the Empire State Building?   Stories: _____

How confident are you in your estimate?_____%

[SURVEY PAGE BREAK]

6. How many hot dogs did Joey Chestnut eat to win the 2011 Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Contest?

_____

How confident are you in your estimate?_____%

[SURVEY PAGE BREAK]

7. How many keys are there on a standard modern piano?   Keys: _____

How confident are you in your estimate?_____%

[SURVEY PAGE BREAK]

8. What is the top speed (in mph) that a cheetah can run?   Speed:_____mph

How confident are you in your estimate?_____%

[SURVEY PAGE BREAK]

9. In what year did Disney's Magic Kingdom open?   Year: _____

How confident are you in your estimate?_____%

[SURVEY PAGE BREAK]

10. How many World Series have the New York Yankees won?   Wins; _____

How confident are you in your estimate?_____%

[SURVEY PAGE BREAK]

11. Not including the cue ball, how many balls are used in a standard pool game (pocket

billiards)?   Ball # _____

     How confident are you in your estimate?_____%

<div align="center">[SURVEY PAGE BREAK]</div>

12. How many U.S. Presidents have there been?   Presidents: _____

     How confident are you in your estimate?_____%

<div align="center">[SURVEY PAGE BREAK]</div>

13. How many times has Lance Armstrong won the Tour de France, prior to his substance abuse

scandal?   _____

     How confident are you in your estimate?_____%

<div align="center">[SURVEY PAGE BREAK]</div>

Appendix E

Directions:

Narcissism is characterized by an inflated sense of self-importance and grandiosity which is usually not supported by any actual talents or accomplishments and may lead to negative interpersonal consequences. Narcissists are more likely to self-promote as well, and frequently over-exaggerate their competencies and positive qualities through bragging. Narcissism is a continuous trait, indicating individuals may exhibit varying levels of narcissism.

High Narcissism Example: These individuals lack empathy for others and have a high need for admiration. They are frequently described as arrogant, self-centered and manipulative. They also may believe they deserve special treatment, and have difficulty tolerating criticism or defeat. Adolf Hitler would be considered a high narcissist.

Low Narcissism Example: Individuals with low levels of narcissism are likely to show more concern for others' needs and care more about team outcomes than individual outcomes. Low narcissists are likely to consider other people's emotions and also attempt to understand and consider other points of view. Gandhi would be considered a low narcissist.

Medium Narcissism Example: Individuals with medium or neutral levels of narcissism may often exhibit a varying traits of both high and low narcissists. They may care for others' needs, yet also manipulate events or have a desire to be recognized. Sometimes they may also have difficulty accepting criticism, yet still consider other opinions. Most college students have medium levels of narcissism.

Please read through the following recorded answers to interview questions. Based on your opinion, please circle what level of narcissism (High, Medium, or Low) corresponds to each response.

(Key: Low Item #1)

At the end of a summer internship I had to speak about my experiences working with my work group. I first gave the company thanks and appreciation for allowing me to intern there. I then told them I did good work because I had a great group of coworkers who supported and helped me the entire way. I was merely a reflection of them. I specifically said that they were giants among me and I was trying to do my best to not get in the way. I wanted them to get all the credit and for me to come off only as thankful for the opportunity.

Low Narcissism   *Medium Narcissism*   *High Narcissism*

(Key: High Item #1)

When there are problems, I usually am able to find the most reasonable solution. I make confident decisions and the outcome is usually good and recognized by those around me. I had to make a decision at work as to how to proceed with a coworker who everyone had problems getting along with. In this situation, I felt no burden. I wanted the person terminated, but others disagreed. I ended up being persuasive in my arguments and the person went on probation and has since been fired because of my recommendations.

Low Narcissism   *Medium Narcissism*   *High Narcissism*

(Key: Medium Item #1)

I had to make executive decisions about the music for the eighth grade dance as a committee

chair on the PTA committee. There were ten other members who had their own differing

opinions and I took their suggestions under consideration. I was sensitive to everyone's choices

and input as well as their individual personalities. Ultimately though, I had to make the final

decisions. I kept true to myself and did what I thought was best according to my own values,

and chose my favorite music style, country. My social ability and interpersonal skills helped

during the situation.

Low Narcissism   *Medium Narcissism*   *High Narcissism*

(Key: Medium Item #2)

This event took place several years ago when I was working in a bank. I was assigned to be the

leader of a team of four people. We were working on a project that involved the transition from

an old system to a new one. We were assigned a specific room in the data center of the office

building. But, I realized that it wasn't well equipped with the computers we needed to carry out

the testing successfully. I insisted that we change the room and the machines to improve our

work. Although it was challenging and I had to convince the management to do so, in the long

run it helped my team perform better.

Low Narcissism   *Medium Narcissism*   *High Narcissism*

(Key: Low Item #2)

I was placed in charge of my work team for a week. We had gotten very far behind on our work

as a whole. It was up to me to find a way to get us caught up. We had a meeting and the rest of

the team was honest and open about what needed to be done. We incorporated the ideas into a plan. The team and I worked together in order to get the work done. Using these behaviors contributed to our decision on how to proceed because I felt this was the best and most fair way to go about things. I also believe it is the most honorable and fair. We ultimately finished everything ahead of schedule.

Low Narcissism   *Medium Narcissism*   *High Narcissism*

(Key: High Item #2)

For my materials engineering project group, we were tasked to select a process that would be the focus of attention of our project. I was the driving force that got us to select hip implants as the center point of our group. Dividing up the seven people into smaller groups, I told everyone what part of the project they would be completing and when we should all meet up again to compare what we researched and to collaborate the data. Being authoritative led to us all doing very well in our assignments and the group was better off for it.

Low Narcissism   *Medium Narcissism*   *High Narcissism*

(Key: Low Item #3)

As a team leader I decided it was time to take a different approach to a project that wasn't going so well. I had a team of 3 others, so altogether there were 4 on the team. I started by having everyone on the team brainstorm as to other ways the project could be done. After listening to everyone's input, we decided as a team which approach to take. So with everyone giving their ideas, we used a compilation of all team members' suggestions and the project went much smoother. Everyone contributed equally and I was very proud of the team.

Low Narcissism   *Medium Narcissism*   *High Narcissism*

(Key: High Item #3)

Recently at work, I had to take a dominant role when my company picked up a new supplier and the main contact who organized this relationship went on vacation for a week. This was a critical time because organization and communication was vital at this initial stage of development. No one was taking the lead to foster the cooperation needed to make this work so convinced my coworkers I was best suited for the task. I stepped up and took the responsibility or organizing information flow and work delegation between our company and theirs. I was very creative in answering questions and coming up with solutions that the guy on vacation would normally handle but everything worked out for that week. I felt I deserved a raise for my contribution.

Low Narcissism   *Medium Narcissism*   *High Narcissism*

(Key: Medium Item #3)

I chose to cancel TV cable service in the break room at work because I felt it was a waste of money. It was hardly being used by anyone in the department. I was paying for it out of my own pocket. I realize that my coworkers enjoyed it, but there are far more productive things to do than watch TV. I consulted with some of my coworkers as I usually do, but only after I had made up my decision. I may have changed my mind depending on the input given, but typically when I make up my mind I go ahead and do it when I am the one in control of the situation.

Low Narcissism   *Medium Narcissism*   *High Narcissism*

(Key: Low Item #4)

This happened once in a meeting with 10 of my staff concerning extra funds. I had heard in a

management meeting that we were well ahead of our budget projections for the year. The extra

money could be split up in a variety of ways. I spent much of the meeting providing praise and

acknowledging the hard work of my staff (as it was their efforts that put us in such a good

financial position). I let the team come to consensus on how they would like to use the money

and helped guide them in the process. Morale was very high and we had the best performing

team in the agency.

Low Narcissism   *Medium Narcissism*   *High Narcissism*

(Key: High Item #4)

The math curriculum for gifted students in my district was bad. The curriculum department

refused to hear my feedback or incorporate my suggestions. I decided to write a new one. I

recruited two other people to help me. I published this curriculum on a wiki as well as hundreds

of resources. I assigned tasks to the other two to contribute to the wiki. I shared it with all of the

other teachers of gifted students in the district. Many of them adopted my curriculum as well,

and it was widely praised by those who did. Those of us who adopted the curriculum had

students score much higher than those who followed the official curriculum. I made this known

to my boss and other stakeholders. My actions resulted in the head of the math curriculum

department being fired and my curriculum being adopted.

Low Narcissism   *Medium Narcissism*   *High Narcissism*

(Key: Medium Item #4)

While in graduate school my team was assigned with creating a strategic plan—a rather complex and long process. When meeting, no one wanted to be the group leader or make a decision on which roles (who does what) they wished to take. Since this was getting nowhere and realizing the amount of work this would require (it's about a 35 to 40 page project) I stepped forward and volunteered to be the leader. At this point I assigned the other roles to the group and began formulating our timeline. Although I consulted with them, I acted in an assertive way to limit objections. I feel that people in general want to be led and can easily be persuaded by someone who is willing to take charge and make the decisions.

Low Narcissism   *Medium Narcissism*   *High Narcissism*

Appendix F

Final Stimulus Interview Questions:

1. Describe a time when you had to take deal with conflict.

(H) When there are problems, I aim to find the most reasonable solution. I make confident decisions and the outcome is usually good and recognized by those around me. I had to make a decision at work as to how to proceed with a coworker who everyone had problems getting along with. In this situation, I felt no burden. I wanted the person terminated, but others disagreed. I ended up being persuasive in my arguments and the person went on probation and has since been fired because of my recommendations.

(M) I had to make executive decisions about the eighth grade dance as a committee chair on the PTA committee. There were ten other members who had their own differing opinions and I took their suggestions under consideration. I was sensitive to everyone's choices and input as well as their individual personalities. Ultimately though, I had to make the final decisions. I kept true to myself in doing the right thing but with sensitivity to all others—listening, understanding and explaining. My social ability and interpersonal skills helped during the situation.

(L) I was placed in charge of my work team for a week. We had gotten very far behind on our work as a whole. It was up to me to find a way to get us caught up. We had a meeting and the rest of the team was honest and open about what needed to be done. We incorporated the ideas into a plan. The team and I worked together in order to get the work done. Using these behaviors contributed to my decision on how to proceed because I felt this was the best and most fair way to go about things. I also believe it is the most honorable and fair.

2. Describe a time when you had to lead a group.

(H) For my materials engineering project group, we were tasked to select a process that would be the focus of attention of our project. When we first came together I was the driving force that got us to select hip implants as the center point of our group. Dividing up the seven people into smaller groups, I told everyone what part of the project they would be completing and when we should all meet up again to compare what we researched and to collaborate the data. Being authoritative led to us all doing very well in our assignments and the group was better off for it.

(M) This event took place several years ago when I was working in a bank. I was assigned to be the leader of a team of four people. We were working on a project that involved the transition from an old system to a new one. We were assigned a specific room in the data center of the office building. But I realized that it wasn't well equipped with the computers we needed to carry out the testing successfully. I insisted that we change the room and the machines to improve our work. Although it was challenging and I had to convince the management to do so, in the long run it helped my team perform better.

(L) As a team leader I decided it was time to take a different approach to a project that wasn't going so well. I had a team of 3 others, so altogether there were 4 on the team. I started by having everyone on the team brainstorm as to other ways the project could be done. So with everyone giving their ideas, we used a compilation of all team members' ideas and the project went much smoother.

3. Describe a time when you had to make a decision that affected others.

(H) Recently at work, I had to take a dominant role when my company picked up a new supplier and the main contact who organized this relationship went on vacation for a week. This was a

critical time because organization and communication was vital at this initial stage of development. No one was taking the lead to foster the cooperation needed to make this work so I stepped and took the responsibility or organizing information flow and work delegation between our company and theirs. I had to be creative in answering questions and coming up with solutions that the guy on vacation would normally handle but everything worked out for that week.

(M) I chose to cancel TV service because I felt it was a waste money. It was hardly being used by anyone in the household. I was paying for it out of my own pocket. There are far more productive things to do than watch TV. I consulted with others in the household as I usually do, but only after I had made up my decision. I may have changed my mind depending on the input given, but typically when I make up my mind I go ahead and do it when I am the one in control of the situation.

(L) This happened once in a meeting with 10 of my staff concerning extra funds. I had heard in a management meeting that we were well ahead of our budget projections for the year. The extra money could be split up in a variety of ways. I took much of the meeting providing praise and acknowledging the hard work of my staff (as it was their efforts that put us in such a good financial position). I let the team come to consensus on how they would like to use the money and helped guide them in the process. Morale was very high and we had the best performing team in the agency.

Appendix G

Richard,

Thank you for your swift response.

I have completed the review and I have determined that your proposed protocol qualifies for an IRB exemption. I have attached the approval notice along with approved email template and informed consent templates (all three in one file).

Just for future reference, please try to use fresh forms by downloading them from our website. There were a few texts that may have been for a different protocol. Since most of the other fields were correctly entered, I didn't want to hold the protocol.

Please note that the study is approved till 07/31/2023. The protocol can be extended by just sending an email.

Best wishes and please feel free to contact me should you need additional assistance

Sincerely,

Moses M. Prabu, Ph.D.

Compliance Officer

Middle Tennessee State University (PO BOX 124)
Tel: +1 615 494 8918
Email: Moses.Prabu@mtsu.edu

Appendix H

Primary Investigator: Richard Evitts
PI Department & College: College of Behavioral and Health Sciences - Psychology
Faculty Advisor (if PI is a student): Mark Frame
Protocol Title: Decision Making for Hiring Processes
Protocol ID: 20-1094   **Approval Date:** 02/10/2020   **Expiration Date:** 07/31/2023

Information and Disclosure Section

1. **Purpose**: This research project is designed to help us evaluate This research study seeks to determine the extent to which varying factors predict hiring decisions in an employment setting.
   .
2. **Description**: There are several parts to this project. They are:
   o Participants will be asked about their familiarity with interviewing, then proceed to take surveys regarding individual differences and general knowledge. Participants will then read through structured interviews for three applicants, then make a hiring decision.

3. **Duration**: The whole activity should take about 1-2 hourshourshours The participants will be compensated as described below. The participants will be compensated as described below. The participants will be compensated as described below. The participants must at least take 1-2 hours.

4. **Here are your rights as a participant:**

   - Your participation in this research is voluntary.
   - You may skip any item that you don't want to answer, and you may stop the experiment at any time (but see the note below)
   - If you leave an item blank by either not clicking or entering a response, you may be warned that you missed one, just in case it was an accident. But you can continue the study without entering a response if you didn't want to answer any questions.
   - Some items may require a response to accurately present the survey.

5. **Risks & Discomforts:** There is no risk of harm or potential discomfort other than those expected in daily life

6. **Benefits:** While there are no direct benefits to participating in this study, the findings of this research will help to reveal whether or not narcissistic individuals will select similarly narcissistic job candidates.

7. **Identifiable Information**: You will NOT be asked to provide identifiable personal informationYou will NOT be asked to provide identifiable personal informationYou will NOT be asked to provide identifiable personal information.

8. **Compensation: $3.00**

The participants recruited through MTurk platform will be compensated $3.00 (THREE USD) if they satisfy the following requirements

Compensation Requirements:
a) *The qualifications to participate in this research are:* Participants must be 18 years of age or older. There are also attention checks included in the survey. If you fail two (2) or more of these, your data will not be included. *If you do not meet these qualifications, you will not be included in the research and you will not be compensated.*
b) *After you complete this consent form you will answer screening questions. If you fail to qualify for the research based on these questions, the research will end and you will not be compensated.*
c) *Please do not participate in this research more than once. Multiple attempts to participate will not be compensated.*
d) *Attention checks are embedded in the research. If you fail* two (2) *or* more *of these, then you will not be compensated.*
e) *To be compensated, you must receive a completion code. That requires clicking on the final screen of the study. If you choose to stop for any reason, you will still need to click through until the end to receive compensation (just leave the items blank and click through until the end <; if items require a response to present the survey accurately, you will need to respond to those items as your progress to the end of the survey)>.*
f) *Based on the cash value of the compensation (more than $75 per iteration), you will be asked for tax details for accounting purposes.*

9. **Confidentiality.** All efforts, within reason, will be made to keep the personal information private but total privacy cannot be promised. Your information may be shared with MTSU or the government, such as the Middle Tennessee State University Institutional Review Board, Federal Government Office for Human Research Protections, *if* you or someone else is in danger or if we are required to do so by law.

10. **Contact Information.**   If you should have any questions about this research study or possibly injury, please feel free to contact Richard Evitts by telephone 312-505-7941 or by email rae2i@mtmail.mtsu.edu ID OR my faculty advisor, Mark Frame, at mark.frame@mtsu.edu and 615-898-2565. You can also contact the MTSU Office of compliance via telephone (615 494 8918) or by email (compliance@mtsu.edu). This contact information will be presented again at the end of the experiment.

Participant Response Section

☐No ☐Yes I have read this informed consent document pertaining to the above identified research

☐No ☐Yes The research procedures to be conducted are clear to me

☐No ☐Yes I confirm I am 18 years or older

☐No ☐Yes I am aware of the potential risks of the study

By clicking below, I affirm that I freely and voluntarily choose to participate in this study. I understand I can withdraw from this study at any time without facing any consequences.

☐ NO I do not consent
☐ Yes I consent

Appendix I

Thank you for your participation. If you have any questions concerning any of the measures you took or you would like to know the results of this study, please contact Dr. Mark Frame (mark.frame@mtsu.edu) or Richard Evitts (rae2i@mtmail.mtsu.edu).

Please do not share any of this information with anybody as it may limit our ability to continue this study. Thank you.

Please keep this page open and copy the 4-digit number below to paste into the MTurk website to obtain credit. After you have completed this step, please press the continue button one more time.

${e://Field/Random%20I.D.}

Please press the continue button one more time.