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Assessing the Social Value of Personality Information

Crisanta-Alina MAZILESCU[1], Sid ABDELLAOUI[2], Bernard GANGLOFF[3]

Abstract

Interpersonal interactions are often based on information obtained about others, and in particular information about personality. Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that personality information has some value. The purpose of this study was to examine the assignment of value to information based on the 5 dimensions generally defined as the constituent features of human personality. The Big Five questionnaire was used to examine the value assigned by 180 participants to each dimension based on the two dimensions of value: social desirability and social utility. The study found that information is considered to be more desirable and useful than undesirable and pernicious and that even undesirable information is generally considered useful. Variations were also observed according to the considered dimension and the pole (positive or negative) to which the information refers.

Keywords: personality; traits; value; social desirability; social utility.

Introduction

Studies in information research have examined a range of issues involving information retrieval, information seeking, information processing and information transmission. Some studies have examined information from the point of view of the 'cost of information acquisition' (Colombo and Femminis, 2008), while others have focused on the impact of information and its 'efficient use' (Angeletos and Pavan, 2007).

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Recent studies have shown that information-seeking behaviors and information acquisition behaviors are related to personal characteristics, suggesting that there are profound differences in the way people seek for information. These differences can be linked to personality traits (in the sense that personality dispositions can account for the inclination toward and preference for certain modes of information seeking), but also to learning styles and a range of emotional factors. For example, a study by Kuhlthau (quoted by Heinstrom, 2003, 2006) found that uncertainty, worry and even anxiety are involved in the information-seeking process.

In a study of personality information used in personality judgments, Letzring, Wells, and Funder (2006) found that the quantity and quality of information determine the accuracy of judgments. The authors found that personality judgments are likely to be more accurate when people are encouraged to reveal relevant information about their personality. Other studies have shown the impact of context on judgment accuracy by distinguishing between public and private contexts. In public, behavior is subject to pressures that tend to inhibit the natural expression of personality, which explains why information collected in a public context tends to be less accurate than information collected in a private context (John and Robins, 1993). Referring to the five dimensions of the Big Five, John and Robins (1993) also found that in a private context information is more accurate if it relates to emotional stability, less accurate if it relates to agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness, and even less accurate if it relates to extraversion.

Gosling, Ko, Mannarelli and Morris (2002) proposed a model of interpersonal perception based on research targeting information from the office and bedrooms. Based on the analysis of the personal physical environment (office and bedroom), observer impressions were found to correlate significantly with the information provided by occupants. The study found that openness to experience (assessed by observers inspecting dormitories) correlated with the level of openness to experience of the occupants of bedrooms (r=.65). Vazire and Gosling (2004) transferred this 'ecological model of interpersonal perception', as Gosling, John, Craik, and Robins (1998) called it, from information coming from a physical environment to information coming from a virtual environment (such as personal websites). An analysis of websites yielded high levels of inter-observer consensus and observer accuracy. Observer impressions of the creators of the websites were generally clear and coherent, and observers tended to agree on who the creators were. The trait that was considered to be most perceptible in these websites was openness to experience, followed by extraversion and agreeableness (Vazire and Gosling, 2004).

To the best of our knowledge, very few studies have examined the value of information about others, particularly information about others' personality. While some studies have examined the value of personological traits (see for example Le Barbenchon, Cambon and Lavigne, 2005), the value of the information relating

to these traits has been largely overlooked. To consider, for example, that someone who is an extrovert has more value than someone who is an introvert is to assume that the information that must sought about the level of introversion/extraversion needs to be assessed and judged as having a certain value. There is widespread agreement (see Rolland, 1994, p.65; Caprara, Barbaranelli, and Borgogni, 1997, p.13; Mignon and Mollaret, 2006, p.218; see also Digman, 1990, p. 436 and Widiger, 1993, p.82, quoted by Pervin, 1994, p.103) that personality consists of five basic factors (neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness; see Costa and McCrae, 1985). This study examined the value of personological information based on the Big Five model. Since social desirability and social utility are considered to be the two dimensions of value (Beauvois, 1995; Beauvois, Dubois and Peeters, 1999; Dubois, 2005; Dubois and Beauvois, 2001; Cambon, 2002; Le Barbenchon, Cambon and Lavigne, 2005)[4], the study focused more specifically on the desirability and utility of the information provided by each of the five dimensions of the Big Five model.

Method

Procedure and instrument

The participants were given a list of 60 trait-descriptive items referring to the 5 dimensions of the Big Five model drawn from the NEO PI-R developed by Costa and McCrae (1998) (since each of the 5 dimensions includes 6 facets, each facet was presented along with a positive description and a negative description, giving a total of 12 trait-descriptive items per dimension). Each participant was informed that they would be put in contact with a stranger and that the only information provided about this individual would be that s/he had characteristic X expressed by one of the 60 trait-descriptive items[5]. Based on the information provided, the participants were invited to answer 2 questions. Question 1 referred

[4] Desirability is assumed to refer to the agreeableness, attractiveness, and pleasantness of each characteristic of the assessed object, while utility refers to the tendency of each characteristic to enable the object to fulfill its objectives (Peeters, 1986, speaks of 'self-profitability') or to enable society as a whole to fulfill its objectives (Beauvois, 1995, speaks of 'social utility'). In the case of utility, while there appears to be a distinction between the two at a conceptual level, this distinction is not reflected at an empirical level: according to a study by Cambon, Djouari and Beauvois (2006), self-profitable characteristics are also useful to society (the correlations between the two utilities vary between .85 and .88). It is also important to note that while different names have been given to both dimensions of value (for example, value and dynamism in Osgood, 1962, or communion and agency in Wiggins, 1991; etc.), they appear to refer to similar concepts (see Beauvois, Dubois and Peeters, 1999).

[5] Because of the exploratory nature of this study, it seemed important to begin with a neutral, decontextualized situation, which could subsequently be used as a reference for answers obtained in contextualized situations.

to the desirability of information (participants were asked to indicate whether they found the information agreeable, indifferent or disagreeable), while question 2 referred to the utility of information (participants were asked to indicate whether they found the information useful, irrelevant or annoying – *gênant* in French). The term 'annoying' was used in preference to 'harmful' (*nuisible*) or 'pernicious' (*pervers*), the terms used by Beauvois (1976)[6].

To ensure a consistent understanding of the trait-descriptive items (following Mollaret and Mignon, 2006), each item was presented along with a brief description drawn from the NEO PI-R manual. Table 1 shows the descriptions provided for the positive and negative traits of the 6 facets of the 'Agreeableness' dimension[7].

Table 1: Descriptions provided for the 'Agreeableness' dimension

A1	**Trust**	+	people who 'are disposed to think that others are honest and well-intentioned'
		-	people who 'tend to be cynical and skeptical and to assume that others may be dishonest or dangerous'
A2	**Straightforwardness**	+	People who 'are frank, sincere and ingenuous'
		-	people who are 'willing to manipulate others through flattery, craftiness or deception'
A3	**Altruism**	+	people who 'have an active concern for others' welfare as shown in generosity, consideration of others, and a willingness to assist others in need of help'.
		-	people who 'are somewhat more self-centered and are reluctant to get involved in the problems of others'
A4	**Compliance**	+	people who 'tend to defer to others, to inhibit aggression, and to forgive and to forget'
		-	someone who 'is aggressive, prefers to compete rather than to cooperate, and has no reluctance to express anger when necessary'
A5	**Modesty**	+	people who 'are humble and self-effacing, though they are not necessarily lacking in self-confidence or self-esteem'
		-	people who 'believe they are superior people and may be considered conceited or arrogant by others'
A6	**Tender-mindedness**	+	people who 'are moved by others' needs and emphasize the human side of social policies'
		-	people who 'are more hardheaded and less moved by sympathetic appeals to pity' and who 'would consider themselves realists who make rational decisions based on cold logic'

(quoted from http://www.sigmaassessmentsystems.com/samplereports/neopi3 brcreport.pdf)

[6] The instruction and an example of questions are provided in appendices 1 and 2, respectively.

[7] The full set of descriptors is given in appendix 3 along with the 5 dimensions and their 6 facets.

Sample

180 male and female students participated in the study. The participants were divided into 6 equivalent groups. Each participant was given 10 descriptors. The distribution of participants was governed by the length of the questionnaire, meaning that its application to a single population was difficult. The distribution of participants is shown in table 2.

Table 2: Gender distribution of participants by group

Group	Women	Men	Mean age
1	16	14	19.3
2	15	15	19.7
3	16	14	19.6
4	16	14	19.7
5	13	17	20
6	14	16	20
Total	90	90	

Results

Analysis of the 5 grouped dimensions

A cumulative analysis of positive and negative side of personality traits indicates (table 3) that information about personality traits are predominantly subject to desirability judgments (sum total of positive judgments and negative judgments: 69.95% of responses) and utility judgments (sum total of positive judgments and negative judgments: 76.83% of responses). The study found that desirability judgments were more often positive than negative (χ^2 = 4.32; p<0.05)[8], while utility judgments were more often positive than neutral (χ^2 = 24.92; p<0.05) or negative (χ^2 = 58.13; p<0.05), and more often neutral than negative (χ^2 = 11.72; p<0.05). The study also found that information was more often considered to be useful than desirable (χ^2 = 6.87; p<0.05) and more disagreeable than annoying (χ^2 = 14.48; p<0.05). By contrast, the difference between desirability and utility was not significant in the case of neutral judgments (30% of respondents in the case of agreeableness and 23% of respondents in the case of utility).

If the positive and negative side of the 5 grouped dimensions are analyzed separately, a predominance of agreeableness judgments over both neutral judgments (χ^2 = 25,83; p<0.05) and disagreeableness judgments (χ^2 = 46,55; p<0.05) is found in the case of desirability judgments on the positive side (i.e. positive personality traits; see table 4). In the case of utility, neutral judgments were also significantly more frequent than negative judgments, yielding the following order of significant differences: useful, irrelevant, annoying.

[8] No significant difference was found between neutral judgments and positive or negative judgments.

On the negative side (table 4), one significant difference was found in the case of desirability and this indicate a predominance of negative and neutral judgments over positive judgments (χ^2 = 10.88, p <0.05) (χ^2 = 7.97, p <0.05). The same order was found in the case of utility: useful, irrelevant, annoying.

Table 3: *Distribution (%) of desirability judgments and utility judgments of the 60 descriptors*

	Positive judgments		Neutral judgments		Negative judgments	
Desirability	43.67%	agreeable	30.05%	indifferent	26.28%	disagreeable
Utility	71.83%	useful	23.17%	irrelevant	5%	annoying

Table 4: Distribution (%) of desirability judgments and utility judgments of each of the 60 descriptors (30 positive descriptors and 30 negative descriptors)

		Positive judgments	Neutral judgments	Negative judgments
Positive side	**Desirability**	69,67%	21,22%	9,11%
	Utility	67,33%	26,00%	6,67%
Negative side	**Desirability**	17,66%	38,89%	43,44%
	Utility	67,33%	26,00%	6,67%

Analysis by dimension (combined positive and negative traits)

Extraversion. The study found that information about extraversion (table 5) was generally considered to be desirable (approximately 50%) and useful (almost 72%). In the case of desirability, positive judgments were more frequent than neutral judgments (χ^2 = 6.45; p<0.05) and negative judgments (χ^2 = 9.37; p< 0.05)[9]. In the case of utility, judgments were more often positive than neutral (χ^2 = 21.75; p<0.05) or negative (χ^2 = 65.56; p<0.05) and more often neutral than negative (χ^2 = 19.87; p<0.05). The differences between positive desirability judgments and positive utility judgments also indicate that there were more 'useful' judgments than 'agreeable' judgments (χ^2 = 4.17; p<0.05) and more 'disagreeable' judgments than 'annoying' judgments (χ^2 = 17.44; p<0.05)[10].

Conscientiousness. For the 'Conscientiousness' dimension (table 5), positive desirability judgments were more frequent than neutral judgments (χ^2 = 4.99;

[9] No difference was found between neutral and negative judgments.

[10] The differences between neutral judgments were not significant (X2 = 0.4, ns).

p<0.05) and negative judgments (χ^2 = 5.5; p<0.05). Similar results were found in the case of utility, since positive judgments were more frequent than neutral judgments (χ^2 = 36.63; p<0.05) and negative judgments (χ^2 = 51.56; p<0.05)[11]. A comparison of desirability judgments and utility judgments indicates similar rates of neutral judgments (χ^2 = 2.54; ns). By contrast, 'useful' judgments were more frequent than 'agreeable' judgments (χ^2 = 6.51; p<0.05), while 'disagreeable' judgments were more frequent than 'annoying' judgments (χ^2 = 8.68; p<0.05).

Agreeableness. For the 'Agreeableness' dimension (table 5), no difference was found in the case of desirability judgments. However, in the case of utility judgments, positive judgments were more frequent than neutral judgments (χ^2 = 18.36; p<0.05) and negative judgments (χ^2 = 57.33; p<0.05), while neutral judgments were more frequent than negative judgments (χ^2 = 16.67; p<0.05). The differences between neutral desirability judgments and neutral utility judgments were not significant (χ^2 = 0.19; ns). However, the study found a predominance of positive utility judgments (χ^2 = 10.64; p<0.05) and negative desirability judgments (χ^2 = 23.47; p<0.05).

Openness. For Openness (table 5), an equivalent number of positive and neutral judgments was found in the case of desirability, while positive judgments were more frequent than negative judgments (χ^2 = 6.58; p<0.05). Neutral judgments were also more frequent than negative judgments (χ^2 = 4.58; p<0.05). In the case of utility, positive judgments were more frequent than neutral judgments (χ^2 = 13.22; p<0.05) and negative judgments (χ^2 = 49.17; p<0.05), while neutral judgments were more frequent than negative judgments (χ^2 = 15.8; p<0.05). A comparison of desirability judgments and utility judgments indicates that there were significant differences in the case of positive judgments, with utility outweighing desirability χ^2 = 5.13; p<0,05), and negative judgments, with 'disagreeable' judgments again outweighing 'annoying' judgments (χ^2 = 8.67; p< 0.05)[12].

Neuroticism. Finally, for Neuroticism (table 5), positive judgments were more frequent than neutral judgments χ^2 = 4.16; p<0.05) and negative judgments (χ^2 = 5.11; p<0.05) in the case of desirability[13]. For utility, positive judgments were more frequent than neutral judgments (χ^2 = 40.29; p<0.05) and negative judgments (χ^2 = 68.23; p<0.05), while neutral judgments were more frequent than negative judgments (χ^2 = 8.18; p<0.05). The differences between neutral desirability judgments and neutral utility judgments were not significant χ^2 = 2.75; ns), although there were more 'useful' judgments than 'agreeable' judgments (÷2

[11] No significant differences were found for either desirability or utility between neutral judgments and negative judgments.

[12] The differences between neutral judgments were not significant (X2 = 0.97, ns).

[13] No difference was found between neutral judgments and negative judgments.

= 9.06; p<0.05) and, conversely, more 'disagreeable' judgments than 'annoying' judgments (χ^2 = 16.71; p<0.05).

Table 5: Distribution (%) of desirability judgments and utility judgments of the 12 descriptors of each of the five dimensions

		Judgments		
		Positive	**Neutral**	**Negative**
Extraversion	**Desirability**	49.45	27.22	23.33
	Utility	71.95	25.83	2.22
Conscientiousness	**Desirability**	46.39	27.22	26.39
	Utility	74.44	16.67	8.89
Agreeableness	**Desirability**	35.56	30.27	34.17
	Utility	68.89	26.94	4.17
Openness	**Desirability**	41.39	37.50	21.11
	Utility	64.73	29.44	5.83
Neuroticism	**Desirability**	45.56	28.06	26.38
	Utility	79.17	16.94	3.89

Analysis of desirability by dimension and side

Table 6 presents the distribution of desirability judgments relating to positive personality traits. In the case of Extraversion, positive judgments were more frequent than neutral judgments (χ^2 = 42.48; p<0.05) and negative judgments (χ^2 = 63.67; p<0.05), while neutral judgments were more frequent than negative judgments (χ^2 = 63.67; p<0.05). The same order was found for the Conscientiousness dimension, since positive judgments were more frequent than neutral judgments (χ^2 = 49.05; p<0.05) and negative judgments (χ^2 = 79.01; p<0.05). Neutral judgments were also more frequent than negative judgments (χ^2 = 10.12; p<0.05). Likewise, in the case of Agreeableness, positive judgments were more frequent than neutral judgments (χ^2 = 16.03; p<0.05) and negative judgments (χ^2 = 43.80; p<0.05), while neutral judgments were more frequent than negative judgments (χ^2 = 9.61; p<0.05). In the case of Openness, positive judgments were also more frequent than neutral judgments (χ^2 =7.87; p<0.05) and negative judgments (χ^2 =13.77; p<0.05). However, no difference was found between neutral judgments and negative judgments. Finally, for Neuroticism, we find a greater frequency of positive responses compared to neutral (χ^2 = 23.48, p <0.05) or negative (χ^2 = 44.57, p <0.05) and a predominance of neutral responses compared with negative (χ^2 = 5.15, p <0.05).

Table 6: Distribution of desirability judgments on the positive sides of the 5 dimensions

Dimensions	Side	Agreeable	Indifferent	Disagreeable
Extraversion	P	78.89%	15.55%	5.56%
Conscientiousness	P	83.89%	14.44%	1.67%
Agreeableness	P	65%	26.67%	8.33%
Openness	P	52.22%	27.22%	20.56%
Neuroticism	P	68,33%	22,22%	9,45%

An examination of desirability judgments on the negative side of personality traits (table 7) indicates that for Extraversion there were no differences between negative and neutral judgments, but that negative judgments outweighed positive judgments (χ^2 = 7.29; p<0.05), just as neutral judgments outweighed positive judgments (χ^2 = 6.06; p<0.05). For Conscientiousness, there were two significant differences. Negative judgments were more frequent than positive judgments (χ^2 = 29.71; p<0.05), while neutral judgments were more frequent than positive judgments (χ^2 = 19.80; p<0.05). In the case of Agreeableness, negative judgments were more frequent than neutral judgments (χ^2 = 7.26; p<0.05) and positive judgments (χ^2 = 43.93; p<0.05), while neutral judgments were more frequent than positive judgments (χ^2 = 19.29; p<0.05). For Openness, the only difference concerned the predominance of neutral judgments compared to negative judgments (χ^2 = 9.82; p<0.05). Finally, for Neuroticism, the only difference is the greater frequency of negative judgments, compared to positive (χ^2 = 6.39, p <0.05).

Table 7: Distribution of desirability judgments on the negative side of the 5 dimensions

Dimensions	Side	Agreeable	Indifferent	Disagreeable
Extraversion	N	20 %	38.89 %	41.11%
Conscientiousness	N	8.89%	40%	51.11%
Agreeableness	N	6.11%	33.89%	60%
Openness	N	30.55%	47.78%	21.67%
Neuroticism	N	22,78%	33,89 %	43,33%

Analysis of utility by dimension and side

The distribution of utility judgments on the positive sides of the 5 dimensions is shown in table 8. The following order was consistently found (with significant differences at p>0.05): positive judgments, neutral judgments, negative judgments.

Table 8: Distribution of utility judgments on the positive sides of the 5 dimensions

Dimensions	Side	Useful	Indifferent	Annoying
Extraversion	P	75%	21.67%	3.33%
Conscientiousness	P	82.22%	14.45%	3.33%
Agreeableness	P	76.67%	20.55%	2.78%
Openness	P	63.89%	30.55%	5.56%
Neuroticism	P	83,89%	14,44%	1,67%

The distribution of utility judgments on the negative sides is shown in table 9. The following order was found (with significant differences at p>0.05): positive judgments, neutral judgments, negative judgments. There was one exception: no significant difference was found in the case of Conscientiousness between neutral judgments and negative judgments.

Table 9: *Distribution of utility judgments on the negative sides of each of the 5 dimensions*

Dimensions	Side	Useful	Indifferent	Annoying
Extraversion	N	68.89%	30.00%	1.11%
Conscientiousness	N	66.67%	18.89%	14.44%
Agreeableness	N	61.11%	33.33%	5.56%
Openness	N	65.56%	28.33%	6.11%
Neuroticism	N	74,45%	19,44%	6,11%

Comparisons of personality dimensions

Comparisons on the positive side of personality dimensions. In the case of desirability, a comparative analysis of positive, neutral and negative judgments yields the following results:

- For positive judgments (table 10), a close similarity between Agreeableness and Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Openness, and between Conscientiousness and Extraversion and also a similarity of Neuroticism and Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion and Openness, the other two differences are significant: more positive judgments of Conscientiousness or Extraversion than for Openness;
- For neutral judgments, only 1 difference were found to be significant: Conscientiousness gave rise to fewer neutral judgments than Openness ($\chi^2 = 3,92$; $p<0,05$);
- Finally, in the case of negative judgments (table 11), there were fewer non-significant differences (between Agreeableness and Extraversion, between Agreeableness and Neuroticism, between Conscientiousness and Extraversion and between Conscientiousness and Neuroticism);

Table 10: Comparisons of positive desirability judgments of positive personality traits analyzed in pairs (* = p<0.05)

Agreeableness (A)	**Agreeableness**			
Conscientiousness (C)	$\chi2 = 2.40$ (ns)	**Conscientiousness**		
Extraversion (E)	$\chi2 = 1.34$ (ns)	$\chi2 = 0.15$ (ns)	**Extraversion**	
Openness (O)	$\chi2 = 1.39$ (ns)	$\chi2 = 7.37$ *	$\chi2 = 5.43$*	**Openness**
Neuroticism (N)	$\chi2 =0,08$ (n.s.)	$\chi2 = 1,59$ (n.s.)	$\chi2 =0,69$ (n.s.)	$\chi2 =2,28$ (n.s.)

Table 11: Comparisons of negative desirability judgments of positive personality traits analyzed in pairs (= p< 0.05)*

Agreeableness (A)	**Agreeableness**			
Conscientiousness (C)	$\chi2 =4.44$*	**Conscientiousness**		
Extraversion (E)	$\chi2 =0.55$ (ns)	$\chi2 = 2,09$ (ns)	**Extraversion**	
Openness (O)	$\chi2 = 5.18$*	$\chi2 = 16.05$*	$\chi2 = 8.61$*	**Openness**
Neuroticism (N)	$\chi2 = 0,07$ (n.s.)	$\chi2 = 5,44$*	$\chi2=1,01$(n.s)	$\chi2 =4,11$*

Similar comparisons for utility highlighted just one significant difference, with neutral judgments differentiating 'Openness' (14.45% of judgments) from 'Conscientiousness' (30.55% of judgments): X2 = 5.76 with p<0.05 and Neuroticism of Conscientiousness (χ^2 = 5.77 with p <0.05).

Comparisons on the negative side of personality dimensions. The following results were obtained for desirability judgments relating to negative personality traits:

- Consistently significant differences between positive judgments (table 12), with 4 exceptions: Agreeableness/Conscientiousness, Extraversion/ Openness, Extraversion/Neuroticisme and penness/Neuroticisme;
- Generally non-significant differences between neutral judgments;
- Generally non-significant differences between negative judgments (table 13), with 4 exceptions: Openness/Agreeableness, Conscientiousnes/ Openness, Extraversion/ Openness, Openness/Neuroticisme

*Table 12: Comparisons of positive desirability judgments of negative personality traits analyzed in pairs (*â p< 0.05)*

Agreeableness (A)	**Agreeableness**			
Conscientiousness (C)	$\chi2$ =0,52 (ns)	**Conscientiousness**		
Extraversion (E)	$\chi2$ =7.39*	$\chi2$ = 4,27*	**Extraversion**	
Openness (O)	$\chi2$ = 16.29*	$\chi2$ = 11.90*	$\chi2$ = 2.20 (ns)	**Openness**
Neuroticism (N)	$\chi2$ =9,62*	$\chi2$ = 6,09*	$\chi2$ = 0,18 (n.s.)	$\chi2$ = 1,13 (n.s.)

Table 13: Comparisons of negative desirability judgments of negative personality traits analyzed in pairs (= p< 0.05)*

Agreeableness (A)	**Agreeableness**			
Conscientiousness (C)	$\chi2$ = 0,71 (ns)	**Conscientiousness**		
Extraversion (E)	$\chi2$ = 3,53 (ns)	$\chi2$ = 1,08 (ns)	**Extraversion**	
Openness (O)	$\chi2$ = 19,99*	$\chi2$ = 11,91*	$\chi2$ =6,02*	**Openness**
Neuroticism (N)	$\chi2$ =2,69 (n.s.)	$\chi2$ = 0,64 (n.s.)	$\chi2$ =0,06 (n.s.)	$\chi2$ = 7,22*

Finally, in terms of utility, on the negative side of traits, no significant difference was found in the case of positive judgments. Only one significant difference for neutral judgments (Table 14), between conscientiousness and "Agreeableness (χ^2 = 3.99, p <0.05) and only one significant difference for negative judgements between Conscientiousness and Extraversion (χ^2 = 11.43, p <0.05).

Table 14: *Comparisons of neutral utility judgments of negative personality traits analyzed in pairs (*= p<0.05).*

Agreeableness (A)	**Agreeableness**			
Conscientiousness (C)	χ^2 = 3.99*	**Conscientiousness**		
Extraversion (E)	χ^2 = 0.18 (ns)	χ^2 = 2.52 (ns)	**Extraversion**	
Openness (O)	χ^2 = 0.41 (ns)	χ^2 = 1.89 (ns)	χ^2 = 0.05 (ns)	**Openness**
Neuroticism (N)	χ^2 =3,66 (n.s.)	χ^2 = 0,01 (n.s.)	χ^2 = 2,26 (n.s.)	χ^2=1,65(n.s)

Discussion and conclusion

First, the study found that at a general level (based on the 5 grouped dimensions and the combined positive and negative sides), value-laden information (i.e. positive or negative information) outweighed neutral information:

- 70% of information about personality traits was considered to be agreeable or disagreeable, compared to just 30% of information viewed with indifference (neutral desirability);
- 77% of information about personality traits was considered to be useful or annoying, compared to just 23% of information that was deemed irrelevant (neutral utility).

More specifically, the study found that in the case of desirability and utility, positive judgments were more frequent than negative judgments, but also that information was more likely to be judged useful than desirable and more likely to be considered disagreeable than annoying. The desirability/utility differences appear to indicate that the weight of utility was greater than the weight of desirability.

In addition, if the positive and negative sides of the 5 grouped dimensions are analyzed separately, 'useful' judgments invariably outweigh 'annoying' judgments (irrespective of side, i.e. positive or negative personality traits). By contrast, in the case of desirability, 'agreeable' judgments only outweigh 'disagreeable' judgments on the positive side (i.e. positive personality traits).

An analysis by dimension (grouping the positive and negative sides) also indicates a systematic predominance of 'desirable' (or 'useful') judgments over 'non-desirable' (or 'annoying') judgments, with one exception – the 'Agreeableness' trait, where no significant difference was found. However, in this case, 'useful' judgments were more frequent than 'agreeable' judgments and 'disagreeable' judgments were more frequent than 'annoying' judgments irrespective of dimension, thus confirming the predominance of utility over desirability.

In the case of desirability (irrespective of dimension), the study also found that on the positive side of traits positive judgments were more frequent than negative judgments. On the negative side, negative judgments consistently outweighed positive judgments (except for Openness, where no difference was found). In the case of utility (irrespective of dimension), the study found that on the positive and negative sides of traits, 'useful' judgments invariably outweighed 'annoying' judgments.

Finally, the comparisons of the different personality dimensions based on the desirability of information relating to positive personality traits highlighted many differences: first, for disagreeableness judgments (with the following disagreeableness inequalities, from the most disagreeable to the least disagreeable: O > N, A, E, C ; N > C; and A > C), but also, albeit to a lesser extent, for agreeableness judgments (from the most agreeable to the least agreeable: C > O; E > O). On the negative side, there were almost systematic differences according to the specific traits to which the information related, for both positive judgments (for example, from the most agreeable to the least agreeable: O>C, A) and negative judgments (A,C,N,E>O).

As for the comparisons inter-dimension made on the utility side positive and negative traits, few significant differences are observed.

In short, it appears that information about the Big Five personality traits gives rise to different value judgments according to the specific personality traits to which they refer and the positive or negative side of these traits.

'The right information in the right place just changes your life'. Stewart Brand's famous remark is indicative of the utilitarian value that tends to be attributed to good information. However, it also suggests that the value of the same information is likely to vary in different contexts. A further study is planned to examine the value of information about personality traits in a professional context.

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