

**THE ESTABLISHMENT OF IMPLICIT PERSPECTIVES OF
PERSONALITY IN TSHIVENDA-SPEAKING SOUTH
AFRICANS**

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REMARKS

- The reader must note that the publication and reference style used in this mini-dissertation is in accordance with the instructions for publication (4th ed.) of the American Psychological Association (APA). This is in accordance with the policy of the Programme in Industrial Psychology at the North-West University to use the APA style in all scientific documents since January 1999.
- The mini-dissertation is submitted in the form of a research article.

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SUMMARY

Title: The establishment of implicit perspectives of personality among Tshivenda speaking South Africans.

Key terms: Personality, cross cultural personality assessment, five factor model and Vhavenda culture.

Personality tests are widely used in South Africa. The application of personality assessment techniques for clinical and personnel decisions has been a major activity for psychologists. All main personality models have been developed in a Western context: the question therefore arises whether these models are adequate and sufficient for South Africa. There is a need to develop personality tests that are based on South African cultures.

In South Africa the continuous use of Western-based personality tests raise a challenge. The challenge also lies with the current legislation with regard to the use of psychological tests. The challenge is to construct an inventory suited to the local needs while retaining the standards of validity and reliability expected of established assessment instruments. Our socially diverse society and its wide implications for the cultural dynamics of personality evaluations that we find in South Africa warrant further research.

A qualitative research design was used in this study, including interviewing as a data gathering method. A total of 120 Tshivenda speaking people from the Thohoyandou district in Limpopo province and Pretoria in Gauteng province were interviewed. A total of 4 722 personality descriptors with a view to Tshivenda speaking people were obtained from the participants, and then translated into English. Content analysis was used to analyse, interpret and reduce these descriptors to a total of 150 personality characteristics which are the most important perspectives of personality for the Tshivenda speaking individuals.

The personality characteristics were divided into eight categories, namely interpersonal relatedness, sociability, conscientiousness, emotionality, meanness, intellect, dominance and a category for other traits. The interpersonal relatedness factor in the Vhavenda personality characteristics could be regarded as a cultural factor. The Tshivenda speaking people are also sociable with a preference for companionship, social skills and numerous friendships. They

also have a strong sense of purpose and high inspiration levels. The Tshivenda speaking people also experience emotions and feelings related to situations that they face.

Intellect characteristics could also be extrapolated from the personality characteristics of the Vhavenda people. The findings of this study were compared to the five factor model, and evidence was found for extraversion and conscientiousness in particular. Very few characteristics of openness on the five factor model correspond to that of the Tshivenda speaking people, except in the cases of a few personality characteristics that were labelled under the category of intellect.

Recommendations for future research are made.

OPSOMMING

Onderwerp: Die bepaling van implisiete persoonlikskenmerke onder Tshivenda-sprekende Suid-Afrikaners.

Sleutelterme: Persoonlikheid, kruis-kulturele persoonlikheidsevaluering, vyf-faktor model en Vhavenda kultuur.

Persoonlikheidstoetse word regoor Suid-Afrika gebruik. Die aanwending van persoonlikheidsevalueringstegnieke vir kliniese en personeelbesluite het groot aktiwiteitsgebiede geskep vir sielkundiges. Al die hoof persoonlikheidsmodelle is egter ontwikkel uit 'n Westerse konteks; die vraag ontstaan dus of die modelle geskik en voldoende is vir Suid-Afrika. Die behoefte om persoonlikheidstoetse te ontwikkel wat gebaseer is op die Suid-Afrikaanse kultuur, het ontstaan.

Die volgehoue gebruik van Westersgebaseerde persoonlikheidstoetse het 'n uitdaging in Suid-Afrika geword. Die uitdaging lê verder ook op die gebied van huidige wetgewing in terme van die gebruik van sielkundige toetse. Die uitdaging is om 'n toetsbattery te ontwikkel wat aan die behoeftes van die plaaslike bevolking voorsien en terselfdertyd voldoen aan standaarde vir geldigheid en betroubaarheid wat verwag word van gevestigde meetinstrumente. Die sosiale diverse gemeenskap en wye aanwending van die kulturele dinamika van persoonlikheidsevaluering wat gevind word in Suid-Afrika verg verdere navorsing.

'n Kwalitatiewe navorsingsontwerp is gebruik met onderhoudvoering as 'n data-insamelings metode. Onderhoude is gevoer met 120 Tshivenda-sprekende individue van die Thohoyandou omgewing in die Limpopo provinsie en Pretoria in Gauteng provinsie. 'n Totaal van 4 722 persoonlikheidsbeskrywings van Tshivenda-sprekende persone is van die respondante verkry en is vertaal na Engels. Inhoudsontleding is gebruik om die beskrywings te analiseer, te vertolk en te verminder na 150 persoonlikheidskenmerke, wat die belangrikste persoonlikheidspektiewe van Tshivenda-sprekende individue beklemtoon.

Die persoonlikheidseienskappe is verdeel in agt breë persoonlikheidskategorieë, naamlik interpersoonlike verwantskap, sosialiteit, pligsgetrouheid, emosies, gemeenheid, intellek,

dominansie, en 'n kategorie vir ander eienskappe. Die interpersoonlike verwantskapsfaktor in die Vhavenda persoonlikheidseienskappe is 'n kulturele faktor. Die Tshivenda-sprekende persone is ook sosiaal met voorkeur vir gemeenskaplikheid, sosiale vaardighede en verskeie vriendskappe. Hulle het ook 'n sterk sin vir doelgerigheid en 'n hoë aanmoedigingsvlak. Die Tshivenda-sprekende persone ervaar emosies en gevoelens in verhouding tot situasies wat hulle teëkom.

Intellektuele eienskappe is ook gevind onder die persoonlikheidseienskappe van die Vhavenda respondente. Die bevindings van die studie is vervolgens vergelyk met die vyf-faktor model en bewyse is gevind vir ekstroversie en pligsgetrouheid. Baie min eienskappe van ontvanklikheid vir die ondervinding-faktor op die vyf-faktor model korrespondeer met dié van die Tshivenda-sprekende persone, behalwe in die geval van 'n aantal persoonlikheidseienskappe wat geplaas is onder die kategorie van die intellek.

Aanbevelings vir toekomstige navorsing is aan die hand gedoen.

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DECLARATION OF LANGUAGE EDITING

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This mini-dissertation focuses on the establishment of implicit perspectives of personality among Tshivenda speaking South Africans.

This chapter contains the problem statement and a discussion of research objectives in which the general and specific objectives are set out. Subsequently, it offers an explanation of the research method and a division of chapters.

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The increased usage of translated personality tests in South Africa has increased the need for research in different personality structures of South African cultural groups. For example, in the South African Police Service, personality tests are increasingly used for job selection and counselling so that work performance can be predicted. As has been indicated already, South Africa is a multicultural country: candidates from all these cultural groups are exposed to the personality tests in day to day job selection processes. This leaves a challenge to psychologists when it comes to the use of personality tests that have been imported from Western countries.

According to Cheung and Leung (1998), borrowing or adapting psychological tests cross-culturally is the most common practice in countries where psychology is not fully developed, and serves the practical purpose of providing usable assessment techniques within a short time frame. However, it has been found that the local normative groups obtained different mean scores on translated personality inventories. With the accumulation of experience in using translated and adapted tests, the deficiencies of the imposed etic approach (use of translated Western tests) have been pointed out.

According to Butcher, Cheung, & Lim, (2003), psychologists adapting tests from Western cultures into other languages and cultures face a number of challenges in order to assure that the instruments are functionally equivalent to the instruments from the country of origin. The determination of what is normal or abnormal behaviour for example is often not easily drawn,

even within one's own cultural group, and the matter as a whole may be more complex when standards are generalised across different societies.

When one takes into consideration further those factors that hinder the adaptation and use of published psychological tests in other countries, more work needs to be done in South Africa to develop our own tests that are based in local cultural groups (Butcher et al., 2003). Before tests can be adapted it is important for the developer to determine what the test publisher's policies are for test translators. For example: does the test publisher provide permission for test translation? Most test publishers require that the copyrights of tests be protected before a project can be undertaken. Some publishers will only agree to a test translation if matters of copyright and test royalty payments are agreed upon. Yet at the beginning stage of adaptation in a developing country it may be very difficult for a researcher to provide such assurances (Butcher et al., 2003). Another issue that limits cross cultural adaptation of psychological tests is that adaptation projects typically involve high labour and material costs for tests translation and adaptation research (Butcher et al., 2003).

In studies on indigenous measures Cheung and associates argued that although the importation of well established Western personality tests provides psychologists with a wealth of evidence to support their applications, one can raise a number of concerns about the transport and test function of test importation since the 1970s (Cheung, Kwong, & Zhang, 2003).

The coming of age in psychology has led to the examination of the cultural relevance of Western theories and tools. Notwithstanding the conscientious efforts made in adaptation of major Western instruments in recent years, challenges have been raised on both ideological and practical grounds. Cheung, Cheung, Leung, Ward, and Leong (2003) cited Sue criticising the predominance of the etic approach. The etic approach emphasises core similarities in all human beings whereas the emic approach utilises a culture B specific orientation relevant to that particular cultural group.

In particular, importation of Western theories and measures represents the imposed etic approach in which Western constructs are assumed to be universally applicable and are imposed on the local culture. Ideologically, this approach is considered to be a form of cultural imperialism undermining national identity and consciousness (Cheung et al., 2003).

Despite the approaches that have been adopted to deal with cultural differences in scores on the translated tests-such as adjusting the cut-off point in interpreting the standardized test scores derived from a foreign norm. Cheung, Cheung, Leung, Ward and Leong (2003) highlight the need for the construction of an inventory that includes major culture specific personality domains in addition to the culture-comparable personality constructs in cases in which a personality inventory is used for the purpose of providing reliable and valid assessment instruments for the people of that culture (Cheung et al., 2003).

According to Cheung et al. (1996), the lack of indigenous personality inventories in the past has meant that personality assessment had to depend on the available English language scale. Many of these scales are valid and appropriate cross-culturally. However, the inclusion of relatively emic (culture-specific) constructs are needed to provide a more comprehensive coverage of the personality dimensions that are important to the local culture.

According to Ho, Peng, Lai, and Chan (2001), the new generation of psychological knowledge is culture dependent. They argue that relationships precede situations in the study of personality and social behaviour. Personality is defined as the sum total of common attributes manifest in and abstracted from a person's behaviour as observed directly or indirectly across interpersonal relationships and situations over time. They rely on the notion that there are identifiable levels of cognition to develop a metatheoretical framework for reconstructing selfhood. Confronting the subject-object dichotomy opens the door to investigation of transcendent consciousness (Ho et al., 2001).

The deficiencies of the imposed etic or Western approaches are addressed by the development of indigenous personality measures. Importantly, the question arises: what is indigenous psychology? How does it lead to new ways of knowledge generation in the study of personality? To answer these questions we explore the matter of how indigenous conceptions of human existence lead to new conceptions and methodologies for theory construction. According to Ho (1998) indigenous psychology can be defined as the study of human behaviour and mental processes within a cultural context in which cultural conceptions and methodologies rooted in that cultural group are employed to generate knowledge. It is obvious that this study is conducted from an indigenous perspective, instead of an imported one. This definition makes it clear that indigenous resources may be applied at different points in the entire knowledge generation process. This definition also makes it clear

that indigenous psychology is characterised by conceptions and methodologies rooted in a given ethnic or cultural group.

The challenge facing indigenous psychologists, then, is to demonstrate how they are indeed informed by their respective indigenous cultures. A more demanding task is to demonstrate how they may enrich mainstream psychology. According to Ho et al. (2001), politically the indigenisation movement is a reaction to the dominance of Western and especially American psychology. The wholesale importation of Western psychology is seen as a form of cultural imperialism that perpetuates the colonisation of the mind. Indigenous psychologists argue that there is a need to develop conceptual frameworks and methodologies rooted in those particular cultures, because much of Western psychology may be irrelevant or inapplicable to them.

An insider's knowledge of the target culture which may nonetheless be acquired by foreign researchers is essential to the conduct of investigations. Without sensitivity (to different behavioural patterns), indigenous psychologists argue, research would result in distortions of social reality. Cheung et al. (1998) cited Kim explaining that the goal of indigenous psychology is to identify knowledge as understood and experienced by people within a culture.

Church and Katibak (1988) argue that the development of indigenous personality measures involves a combined etic-emic approach in which culturally relevant concepts are collected to identify cross-cultural universals as well as culturally unique dimensions.

Dienar, Oishi and Lucas, (2003) confirm that culture can influence personality and vice versa. Both are said to be intertwined, and both are influenced by social learning genetics and their interactions. Based on their acculturation findings, Lin and Church (2004) state that personality is shaped by cultures, and that a relative amount of exposure to a traditional culture affects participant's personality characteristics.

Ho et al. (2001) affirm in addition that the generation of psychological knowledge is culture dependent. A central question for psychologists remains: are personality dimensions universal or culture B specific? A challenge is to identify personality dimensions that are truly unique or specific to a particular culture. The culturally unique dimensions would

overcome the deficiencies of translated instruments that often lack functional and conceptual validity (Cheung & Leung, 1998).

1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives are divided into general objectives and specific objectives.

1.2.1 General objectives

The general objectives of this research are to gain an understanding of the personality structure of the Venda speaking people. This project is part of a larger project looking at different personality structures of eleven cultural groups that are found in South Africa. This study forms the first part of this larger project, and it is aimed at investigating the personality structure of different cultural groups in South Africa. Later the information collected is going to be used in the development of a more comprehensive South African personality inventory. To be able to develop a personality inventory based on the personality structures of different cultural groups in South Africa, data must be collected: therefore this study aims to investigate the personality structure of the Tshivenda speaking people.

1.2.2 Specific objectives

The specific aims of this study are to determine and gain insight in the following aspects:

- Conceptualising of personality based on a survey, analysis and synthesis of relevant extant literature.
- Determining the extent to which the personality structure found in Western studies is applicable to the Venda cultural group.
- Determining the unique personality factors of the Venda cultural group.

1.3 RESEARCH METHOD

The research method consists of a short literature review and an empirical study. The results obtained will be presented in the form of a research article.

1.3.1 Literature review

The literature review will focus on the big five personality theory, the Vhavenda culture and cross-cultural personality assessment.

1.3.2 Empirical study

1.3.2.1 Research design

The nature of this research approach will be qualitative: that is, it will be exploratory and descriptive in nature. The purpose of this design is to explore and analyse the respondent's description of behaviours and habits that are characteristic of different people that he/she interacts with. The design will be used in which the idea is also to draw a sample from a population at a single time, thus to obtain the desired research objectives (Bernard, 2000).

1.3.2.2 Participants

About 120 respondents will be asked to participate in the research through personal contacts and snowball sampling of the respondents that meet the requirements of the sample specification in terms of gender, age and occupational status. According to Bernard (2000), in the case of snowball sampling, one or more key individuals are located and then asked to name others who would be likely candidates for the research. The sample sizes for the study are reported in Table 1.

Table 1

Sample Sizes for the Study

Socioeconomic status/education	Females		Males	
	Age between 18 - 35 years	Age older than 35 - years	Age between 18 - 35 years	Age older than 35 years
Low	10 participants	10 participants	10 participants	10 participants
Medium	10 participants	10 participants	10 participants	10 participants
High	10 participants	10 participants	10 participants	10 participants

1.3.2.3 Data gathering

The researcher will use unstructured interviews to obtain in-depth information about the respondent's experience of description of typical aspects, habits and characteristics of different people. The interviews are conducted in person with the Venda speaking people around Pretoria and in several areas in Limpopo Province. The researcher anticipates interviewing 120 respondents until such time that the researcher finds that the themes are exhausted/saturated.

1.3.2.4 Data analysis

According to Mouton and Marais (1990), once the data has been generated, the researcher attempts to discover relationships or patterns by means of close scrutiny of data. Qualitative data analysis also requires that the large amount of data has to be reduced and interpreted. The researcher will follow various steps in analyzing the data (Terreblanche & Durrheim, 1999).

Practically, data analysis entails transcribing of the interviews to English, since the data will be collected in tshivenda language. It further entails the processes of familiarizing yourself with the data, clustering of the themes and analyzing of the data.

1.3.3 Research procedure

Unstructured interview questions will be used. The respondents will be interviewed one at a time. After being given standard instructions, the respondents will be taped, and the researcher will also take some notes. After the interviews have been conducted the researcher will sit down and transcribe them from Tshivenda to English, and then the respondents will be entered in a work book in the computer in which the themes will be identified and clustered.

1.4 DIVISION OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 1: Introduction.

Chapter 2: Research article.

Chapter 3: Conclusion, limitations and recommendations.

1.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter discussed the problem statement and research objectives. This was followed further by an explanation of the research method and a division of chapters.

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CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF IMPLICIT PERSPECTIVES OF PERSONALITY OF TSHIVENDA SPEAKING SOUTH AFRICANS

ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to determine the implicit personality perspectives of the Tshivenda speaking South African. A qualitative research study was conducted in which the structured interview was used as a data collection method. A purposive sample ($n=120$) of Tshivenda speaking people was taken. Interviews were conducted with each participant, after which translations into English took place. Content analysis was used to analyse, interpret and reduce the personality descriptors to a total of 4 722 personality characteristics. The result of the analysis came out with eight broad personality characteristics categories: sociability, interpersonal relatedness, emotionality, conscientiousness, meanness, dominance, intellect and a category of other traits.

OPSOMMING

Die doelstelling van hierdie studie is om die implisiete persoonlikheidspektiewe van Tshivenda-sprekende Suid-Afrikaners vas te stel. 'n Kwalitatiewe navorsingsontwerp is gebruik met gestruktureerde onderhoude as data-insamelingsmetode. Die ondersoekgroep het bestaan uit 120 Tshivenda-sprekende individue wat op 'n doelgerigte wyse geneem is. Persoonlike onderhoude is met elk van die respondente gevoer wat daarna in Engels vertaal is. Inhouds analise was gebruik om die persoonlikheids beskrywers te analiseer, interpreteer en te verminder na 'n totaal van 4 722 persoonlikheids eienskappe. Die resultate van die analise het agt breë persoonlikheidskategorieë getoon, naamlik sosialiteit, interpersoonlike verwantskap, emosies, pligsgetrouheid, gemeenheid, dominansie, intellek, en 'n kategorie van ander eienskapper.

The application of personality assessment techniques for clinical and personnel decisions has been a major activity for psychologists. According to Hertz and Donovan (2000), the use of personality testing in employee selection was generally looked down upon by personnel selection specialists during several decades prior to the 1990s. This was primarily due to certain conclusions drawn by researchers (Hertz & Donovan, 2000). The general conclusion drawn by these researchers was that personality tests did not demonstrate adequate predictive validity to justify their use in personnel selection. Over the past couple of years, however, there has been an increased sense of optimism regarding the utility of personality tests in personnel selection (Goldberg, 1993; Mount & Barrick, 1995). In recent years, researchers have suggested that the true predictive validity of personality was obscured in earlier research by the lack of a common personality framework that allowed for organizing the traits that were used as predictors (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Mount & Barrick, 1995). With increasing confidence in the five factor model of personality (Goldberg, 1993; John, 1990) researchers began to adopt the Big Five Framework for selection research in the early 1990s (Barrick & Mount, 1991).

Traditionally, the practice was to import personality assessment instruments from Western countries (Cheung & Leung, 1998). All of the main personality models have been developed in a Western context. The question arises whether these models are adequate and sufficient for South Africa. In time the challenge has arisen of examining the cultural relevance of Western theories and tools. Notwithstanding the conscientious efforts made in the adaptation of major Western instruments in recent years, challenges have arisen on both ideological and practical grounds (Cheung & Leung, 1998).

Personality tests are widely used in South Africa. The research on and criticisms about the use of translated tests had given rise to a need to develop personality tests that are based on South African cultures. Researchers in various countries found significant differences cross-culturally when it came to the factor levels of a personality test such as the 16 Personality Factor Questionnaire, 16PF (Van Eeden & Prinsloo, 1997). This had considerable implications for the unconditional use of the questionnaire within the multicultural workforce in South Africa (Abrahams, 1994). In a study that was conducted by Abrahams (2002) to challenge the continued usage of the 16PF (SA 92), it was found that the use of this imported test was biased against black mother-tongue speakers in the South African context. Abrahams (2002) rejected the adoption of the imported test, with scant research to support its

appropriateness in South Africa. According to Abrahams (2002), a great deal of research had shown that the 16PF and other personality tests are inadequate for use in other cultures and countries.

The research conducted with the newer version of the 16PF supports the recognition that the language used is difficult to understand to those respondents whose home language is not English or Afrikaans. Problems also existed with the item and construct comparability of the 16PF (Abrahams, 2002). In another study which Meiring (2000) conducted using the 16PF, significant mean differences between racial groups surfaced along with low levels of internal consistency among black respondents. He therefore concluded that researchers underestimate the impact of language, and he attributed the significant differences in means and standard deviation and the low levels of internal consistency to the fact that blacks did not understand the test items or gave a different meaning to a test item (Meiring, 2000).

In Asian countries psychologists also relied on the adoption of Western personality assessment instruments (Cheung, Kwong, & Zhang, 2003). The same is true of South Africa: Western personality assessment instruments were used. In this strategy, assessment instruments developed in Western culture were adopted in other cultures, with the assumption that the underlying theories and constructs would be universal.

In South Africa the continuous use of translated personality tests in clinical practices, educational settings and in industries for career, personal and organisational development leaves us with a challenge. The challenge also lies in current legislations with regard to the use of psychological tests. That is, the Employment Equity Act (55, 1998) clearly states that psychological testing is prohibited unless the test is valid and reliable and can be fairly applied to all employees. According to Van de Vijver and Rothmann (2004), the challenge lies with the users of the tests when it comes to adhering to the provisions of this act.

One of the challenges of cross-cultural personality assessment is to construct an inventory suited to the local needs, while retaining the standards of validity and reliability that are expected of established assessment instruments (Cheung, Leung, Fan, Song, Zhang & Zang, 1996). According to Butcher, Cheung, and Lim (2003), psychologists adapting tests from Western cultures into another language and cultures face a number of challenges in order to assure that the instruments are functionally equivalent to the instruments from the country of

origin. The determination of what is normal or abnormal behaviour, for example, is often not easily drawn even within one's own cultural group, and may be more complex when standards are generalised across different societies.

Central to this study also is whether personality dimensions are universal or culturally specific. According to Lin and Church (2004) the answer to this question has implications when it comes to theory: for example, regarding the biological and socio-cultural determinants of personality and practice and whether personality inventories developed in one culture can be validly applied for the purposes of assessment or prediction in another culture. It is also said that there are certain universal dimensions of personality that are there in each society, in response to the biological imperatives or universal socio-cultural dilemmas for which language terms are then developed (Heaven & Pretorius, 1998). One additional step in development of instruments in a non-Western culture involves the comparison with existing Western personality scales to examine cross-cultural universals and to identify culturally unique dimensions not covered in the existing instruments, as Cheung, et al. (1996) state.

According to Cheung, Kwong, and Zhang (2003), the importation of well established tests provides psychologists with the wealth of evidence accumulated to support these tests. Yet, cross-cultural differences observed in the tests raise questions about the suitability of direct applications of these instruments. To overcome this problem, cross-cultural researchers could develop local norms for translated Western tests. However, even if local norms are adopted, one major deficiency remains. In translated instruments, indigenous personality constructs that are important and meaningful to the local culture are missing (Cheung, et al (2003), also argue that the specific values and tendencies of the Western culture may unknowingly lead to emphasis or omission of some universal constructs. These deficiencies have led to a rising interest in indigenous developing measures (Cheung & Leung, 1998).

The increased use of translated tests in South Africa has increased the need for research in different personality structures of South African cultural groups. One of the tasks of the South African psychologists will therefore be to develop new instruments and to validate existing instruments for use in multicultural groups.

Definition of personality

According to Derlega, Winstead, and Jones (2005), personality refers to the enduring, inner characteristics of individuals that organise their behaviour. An essential feature of personality psychology is an examination of the inner characteristics of individuals that modify their behaviour, and of how other people's behaviour influences personality.

Personality has been defined in many different ways. Allport (1937) recorded 50 different definitions of the concept of personality as it has been used in various academic disciplines. Most uses of the term can be summarised in terms of two major themes: one meaning of the term originates from the perspective of an observer, and it involves an individual's public presence and social reputation. Personality in the second sense refers to the inner self or being of an individual: one's private, vital and essential nature. With time personality in this sense has come to mean the deep and enduring structures of an individual that form the central core of the self (Derlega et al., 2005). The measurement of personality therefore becomes complicated by the fact that these two perspectives are not easily integrated, and require quite different measurement strategies, since one emphasises the outer visible aspects, while the other focuses on the inner, dynamic whole for the outer perspective on personality (Derlega et al., 2005).

Allport (1937) therefore defines personality as the dynamic organisation within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his/her unique adjustments to his/her environment. For him this organisation is constantly evolving and changing in accordance with motivation and self-regulation - hence he called it dynamic. For Allport (1937) psychophysical systems are very broad concepts which subsumed habits, specific and general attitudes, sentiments and dispositions of other orders. It is out of this concept that he develops his well known theory of traits. His emphasis is upon the so-called within organism process, because he sees behaviour as determined by a complex inner system.

Psychologists do not agree on one answer to the definition of personality. According to Burger (1986) personality is defined as consistent behaviour patterns originating within the individual. Four concepts of this definition can be elaborated: a) consistency-meaning that a person's behaviour patterns display some stability. b) Behaviour - this originates within the individual, and individual differences are important sources of behaviours that make us

different from one another. c) The definition also focuses on the individual's behaviour. This surfaces when one looks for and tries to understand how and why some people respond to a challenge with increased effort, while others react by giving up. d) Finally, the term behaviour is treated broadly. Although other actions are of primary interest to personality psychologists, an examination of such things as thoughts, emotions and attitudes is often required to understand them.

Important to the history and field of personality are personality theories. Personality theories differ in their basic assumptions about human behaviour. They are generally placed into five general categories. Each of these categories is distinguished from the others largely by its assumptions and its focus as well as by the methods it uses to assess personality and treat problem behaviours (Burger, 1986). The psychodynamic approach is based on the works of Freud. Theorists who contributed to the field are Jung, Erikson, Adler and Horney. This approach emphasises the influence of unconscious processes (Burger, 1986). The cognitive approach is based on the works of Bandura, Kelly and Rotter. It focuses on people's beliefs and ways of thinking (Burger, 1986, Derlega, et al., 2005). The behavioural/learning approach is based on the works of Skinner and Watson; it focuses on reinforcement and punishment as basic learning principles (Burger, 1986). The humanistic approach is based on the works of Roger and Maslow. This approach emphasises personal responsibility, the here and now, the phenomenology of the individual and emphasis on personal growth (Derlega et al., 2005). The trait approach is based on the works of Allport, Cattell, Eysenck and Murray. This approach focuses on describing personality in terms of traits (Burger, 1986).

The concept of personality among the Tshivenda speaking people

In every language, personality is described in various ways (Ramalebana, 2004). Simply put, personality can be described as who you are: it is that which you are that makes you a unique individual. Personality cannot be understood apart from its social setting, self and world (Vrey, 1990). For us to have an understanding of the personality structure of the Vhavenda people we need to understand who they are, where they come from and how do they differ from others. It is also important to have an understanding of some of their traditions.

Tshivenda is one of the 11 official languages currently spoken in South Africa. It can be described both as a language which is Tshivenda, Venda which is a region and the people

which are called Vhavenda. Venda is one of the former Bantu homelands that became independent in 1979 (West, 1996). Tshivenda is spoken in the Limpopo province (formerly the Northern Transvaal districts) of Soutpansberg, Makhado (formerly Louis Trichardt), and further to the North. The language which is related to Karanga or Shona of Zimbabwe has affinities with Sotho dialects such as Lobedu (Ziervogel, Wentzel, & Makuya, 1972). The following are the magisterial districts in which the Vhavenda can be found: Dzanani, Makhado (formerly Louis Trichardt), Mutale, Tshitale, Thohoyandou and Vuwani (Ramalebana, 2004).

The Venda group is linguistically fairly uniform. One can hardly speak of dialects within this group; it is better to speak of variations. These are summarised as follows by Van Warmelo (1937). Western Venda (Tshilafuri) is characterised by traces of *Sotho-eig-nyaga* for today Central Venda (Tshimanda), commonly but not universally spoken between Luonde and Lwamando, especially characterised by a sluggishness in the articulation of *muio* for *mullo* which means fire.

Venda proper of the Tshivhase and Mphaphuli areas which has probably been least subjected to foreign influences eastern Venda or Tshimbedzi, of Thengwe and the areas equally far to the east, differing from other dialects only in respect of vocabulary. Extreme eastern or north-eastern Venda (Tshilembethu) has been influenced most by the neighbouring Karanga of Zimbabwe. South Eastern and Southern Venda (Tshironga) of the level country South of the mountains bears the mark of the influence of the Tsonga and Sotho with whom there is contact in those parts.

Although they are a small group in comparison with other cultural groups in South Africa, their origin and history are particularly fascinating. According to West (1996), they are a mixture of an immigrant group which came with its chiefs from the North on the one hand, and the local people whom they found living in the area on their arrival on the other. Venda is a distinct language, but it shares close ties with the Shona (spoken much in Zimbabwe) and with Sotho (West, 1996).

They arrived around the 17th century coming from the North from near Lake Malawi. It is said that their chiefs brought with them a magic charm which defeated their enemies who were powerless before it. They enjoyed military superiority (West, 1996). They kept cattle,

goats, fowls and a few sheep, but most of their energies were devoted to agriculture which is still the dominant activity among them even today. They cultivate various sorts of grains, including sorghum maize which they also use to make their favourite beer, in addition to various vegetables such as sweet potatoes, beans, pumpkins and fruits such as mangoes, bananas, avocados, pawpaws and oranges. The Venda people are skilled in pottery, woodwork, weaving and skin dressing (West, 1996).

Tshivenda as a language is characterised by oral traditions. There are historical narratives such as those about the disappearance of Thohoyandou from Dzata, and how his footsteps can only be traced as far as Zwavhumbwa hills. Or the story of Dyambeu in the caves of Tshiendeulu Mountains where he died with his dogs after a mysterious rock closed the entrance. People tried to rescue him but to no avail. These historical narratives were handed down by word of mouth (Milubi, 2005).

There are folktales that were narrated by the elderly to their young ones in the evening after supper. Oral poetry is employed to praise chiefs, animals, heroes, divination bones and many others. Tshivenda is characterised as a language of rituals, such as the Murundu initiation register, the Musanda (royal) register, the divination and healing registers.

The Venda people form a distinct ethnic group, speaking a language which is not mutually communicative with any other language in its family, and it shares common linguistic features with other languages, as has been mentioned. It is characterised by standard forms. The Berlin Missionaries who stationed themselves at Beuster-Maungani introduced the standard forms of Tshivenda based on the Tshiphani dialect that was spoken around the area. Other dialects like Tshilafuri, Tshironga, Tshimanda and others were not recognised as part of the standard language, and this created major problems in schools and other places where the language was used.

The Venda language is spoken mainly in a concentrated area that is bordered on the North by the Limpopo River (which is its common border with the Republic of Zimbabwe). Large numbers of Venda people are also dispersed in adjoining areas, as well as in various urban areas in the Limpopo province. The speakers of Tshivenda are mostly concentrated in the Northern part of Limpopo province in areas known as Thohoyandou, Nzhelele, Sinthumule, Kutama, Mulima, Masakona, Tshakhuma, Mutale and many other areas. Tshivenda is spoken

by both young and old people. It is also spoken both in rural Venda and in urban areas such as Makhado, Musina, Polokwane, Pretoria and Johannesburg. In Johannesburg, they are found mostly in Chiawelo, although they are scattered all over. Some of the Tshivenda speaking people are found in provinces such as the North West, the Freestate and Mpumalanga. This came about when people found new employment opportunities in the new dispensation.

The urbanisation of the speakers of Tshivenda and migration to other provinces has led to some challenges. Those in urban areas, where their numbers were in the minority, had to assimilate to the dominant language, especially for the sake of their children at school. Outside the school environment, speakers of Tshivenda were forced by circumstances to learn the dominant language/s of the areas in which they found themselves. This has contributed to multi-lingualism. In fact, South Africa has become one big village with people from as far as the Eastern Cape now working in Thohoyandou/Sibasa. Tshivenda speakers are also marrying across language lines, that is, inter-ethnically.

Aspects of personality

The discussion of aspects of personality will focus on the big five personality structure, the cross-cultural studies focusing on work done in China and work in South Africa. According to Allport and Odbert (1936), the Big Five personality structure model embodies the most significant progress in understanding personality. Allport (1937) emphasises the description of personality structures in terms of the organisation of traits within the individuals. According to John and Srivastava (1999), the five factor structure is derived from Cattell's 35 variables. Cattell was one of the first researchers who developed the classification of personality traits into 16 primary factors and eight second order factors (Cattell, Eber, & Tatsuoka, 1992). The five factors are typically labelled extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability and intellect or openness (Goldberg, 1981).

According to Goldberg (1990), the analyses of any reasonable large sample of English trait adjectives in either self or peer descriptions will elicit a variant of the Big Five factor structure, and therefore virtually all such terms can be represented within this model. Goldberg (1981) also argues that the Big Five structure does not imply that personality differences can be reduced to only five traits: rather, these five dimensions represent

personality at the broadest level of abstraction, and each dimension summarises a large number of distinct, more specific personality characteristics. Goldberg (1990) raises the challenge therefore that given that the Big Five structure seems to characterise the relations among English trait adjectives, it is reasonable to try to discover its generality with a view to other types of stimuli as well as other languages.

The results reviewed suggest that the Big Five structure provides a replicable representation of the major dimensions of trait description in English (John & Srivastava, 1999). It is further argued that the five factor structure seems to generalise reliably across different types of samples, raters and methodological variations. Since generalisability across languages and cultures is another important criterion for evaluating personality taxonomies (John & Srivastava, 1999), this is significant. Taxonomic research in other languages and cultures will therefore determine the usefulness of taxonomy across cultural contexts, and test for universals and variations in the encoding of individual differences across languages and cultures (Goldberg, 1981).

McCrae and Costa (1999) argue that in the narrow sense the five factor model of personality is an empirical generalisation about the co-variation of personality traits. According to John and Srivastava (1991) the model has been a great utility to the field by integrating and systematising diverse conceptions and measures. McCrae and John (1992) further argue that the five factor model is not a theory of personality, but it implicitly adopts the basic tenets of traits theory, namely that individuals can be characterised in terms of relatively enduring patterns of thoughts, feeling and actions, and that traits can be qualitatively assessed.

According to McCrae and Costa (1999), traits are biologically based and the five factors and their structure are heritable. Rossier, Dahourou & McCrae (2005) argue that because all people share the same human genome, the five factor theory therefore rightly claims that certain characteristics of traits including their structure and development should be universal. Yet it is obvious that cultures differ in the behaviours that their members typically exhibit, and the five factor theory accommodates this fact by distinguishing sharply between traits which are construed as basic tendencies, and the category of characteristic adaptations that directly guide behaviour, such as skills, beliefs and attitudes (Rossier, et al., 2005).

According to Goldberg (1990, 1993), and McCrae and John (1992) many researchers believe that personality characteristics are best summarised in terms of the Big Five, but one criticism of studies that have obtained the Big Five factor structure in analysis of lexical data sets is that the emergence of those factors may have been unduly favoured by biases in variable selections. For example, a researcher might inadvertently influence the results of a lexical personality study by including certain infrequently used variables that are likely to define a desired factor or by clustering variables in such a way that the importance of some traits is exaggerated or understated (Hahn, Lee, & Ashton, 1999).

According to Hahn et al. (1999), one response to this criticism is to factor analyse a large unclustered set of personality variables that are selected according to some objective criterion. Church, Reyers, Katigbak, and Grimm (1997) conducted factor analyses of a comprehensive set of 622 familiar Filipino person descriptive adjectives and a reduced set of 280 adjectives. In their analysis they found seven replicable dimensions in which all of the Big Five factors were present. Some researchers have suggested that the ambiguous results of studies like these may indicate shortcomings of the lexical approach to the study of personality structure. Because languages differ both in the particular traits that are encoded and in the broader aspects of personality that are emphasized, lexical studies confound differences in personality languages (Hahn et al., 1999).

What sets apart the natural language as a source of personality attributes from other sources is embodied in a basic assumption that underlies the various lexical approaches (John, Angleitner, & Ostendorf, 1988). Saucier and Goldberg (2001) argue that the rationale for lexical studies rests on the assumption that the most meaningful personality attributes tend to become encoded in language as single word descriptors. John et al. (1988) also argue that the dimensions of personality traits are best described successfully by means of the lexical approach. In this approach a lexicon is scanned systematically for trait-descriptive words, and thus comprehensive taxonomy of relevant terms is compiled. The individual differences that are most salient and socially relevant in people's lives will become encoded into their language, and the more important such a difference, the more likely it is to become expressed as a single word. The analysis of the personality vocabulary represented in a natural language should thus yield a finite set of attributes that the people in the language community have generally found to be the most important according to John et al. (1988).

This approach has its limitations: first, the criteria of importance that have shaped the personality lexicons of lay people are not well understood. Moreover, some individual differences that would be of scientific interest may not be sufficiently obvious for lay people to notice and encode as single words. One way to evaluate the comprehensiveness of language based taxonomies is therefore to compare them to sets of attributes compiled from the personality literature.

The second limitation of the lexical rationale is that personality attributes included in the lexicon may differ across languages communities, and these may tend to change over time. These characteristics of natural languages may limit the generalisability of language based taxonomies. Nevertheless, the effects of culture and time on the personality lexicons can be studied empirically: researchers have now begun cross cultural studies to evaluate the generalisability of their taxonomies. Thirdly, the meaning of natural language terms is too vaguely defined, ambiguous and context dependent to serve as useful scientific terminology.

John, et al. (1988) argue that dissatisfied as we may be, verbal bags are all we have to work with. Allport (1961) also argues that our fate is therefore to analyse traits in words, doing the best we can along the way to define our terms. The lexical approach has led to establishment of the Big Five factors of personality which has been confirmed in many societies worldwide. The approach also yields a powerful tool to establish culture specific characteristics.

In a study that compares English and Chinese Personality Assessment Inventories (CPAIs) and a measure indigenous to the Chinese Culture, with the NEO-FFI, an imported measure from a Western Culture, two findings were made by Cheung et al. (2001). First, the five-factor model does not cover all the important personality factors in the Chinese Culture. When it comes to the NEO-PI-R, the Interpersonal Relatedness factor of the CPAI is unique and clearly defined in the six-factor solution. The Interpersonal Relatedness factor is forced to merge with the conscientiousness factor only in the five-factor solution. Second, the openness factor of the five-factor model 15 is missing from the CPAI, and is defined mainly by NEO-FF1 and NEO-PI-R subscales.

According to Church and Katibak (1988), the challenge to the universal theories of personality, such as the five factor model of personality, still remains, as been highlighted by Cheung, Leung, Song, and Xie (2001), based on their research finding with an indigenous

measure. Cheung and Leung (1998) argue that the development of indigenous personality measures involves a combined etic-emic approach in which culturally relevant concepts are collected to identify cross-cultural universals as well as culturally unique dimensions. The culturally unique dimensions would therefore overcome the deficiencies of translated instruments that often lack functional and conceptual validity (Berry, 1989). In the combined etic-emic approach in cross-cultural personality studies, culturally relevant items are generated to assess dimensions of emic concepts for individual cultures. Those dimensions that emerge in all cultures constitute etic dimensions, whereas those dimensions that emerge only in one culture constitute emic dimensions (Church & Katibak, 1988). The combined etic-emic approach has been largely adopted in the development of indigenous Chinese personality inventories such as the Chinese Personality Assessment Inventory (CPAI).

Multicultural personality research in South Africa is limited (Abrahams, 2002; Abrahams & Mauer, 1999a, 1999b; Meiring, 2000). A few studies investigated the five factor model in South African cultural groups. For instance, Meiring, Van de Vijver, Rothmann and Barrick (2005) investigated the adequacy of the 15QF+ personality measure by focusing in a group of police applicants from all cultural groups in South Africa. They concluded that the 15QF+ was not suitable to the multicultural context of South Africa, since it showed low internal consistencies of some scales, and the lack of construct equivalence. According to Van Eeden and Prinsloo (1997), in their study to determine the fairness of the 1992 South African version of the 16PF, it was clear that in the cases of all the factors, the constructs measured by the 16 personality factors could not be generalised unconditionally to the different subgroups.

The socially diverse society and the wide implications that this has in terms of the cultural dynamics of personality evaluation in South Africa warrant further research into the fairness of personality tests like the 16 personalities questionnaire with a view to various groups (Van Eeden & Prinsloo, 1997). Van Eeden and Prinsloo (1997) cited Retief (1992) saying that different cultures attribute different meanings to events and situations, and could therefore be expected to respond differently to the items of a personality questionnaire. He further believes that consistent differences that could be explained in terms of cultural factors are acceptable in the personality domain (Van Eeden & Prinsloo, 1997). Taylor and Boeyens (1991) recommend that the meaning attached to psychological constructs by all relevant cultures must be considered in developing a South African personality assessment instrument.

According to Foxcroft (1997), the practice of psychological testing in South Africa needs to be understood in terms of the impact that past apartheid political policies have had on test development use. According to Foxcroft (1997), the users and developers of psychological tests face many challenges in this era of transformation and nation building in South Africa. Because of the impact of past apartheid policies on psychological test development, and in view of the multicultural and multilingual nature of the South African society, a more comprehensive code of fair testing practice is needed. Foxcroft (1997) further argues that there should be sensitivity about issues of fairness with regard to the influence of culture on test performance (Foxcroft, 1997).

The development of unbiased, culturally appropriate measures in the multicultural, multilingual South African Society is faced with difficulties that have also slowed down the rate at which tests are being developed (Foxcroft, 1997). Developing tests that tap into aspects of behaviour common to various cultural groups is highly complex in the South African context, because South Africa is not simply a multicultural society: it is a multicultural society in which acculturation of many kinds is taking place, and in which a new nationhood is actively encouraged by political authorities (Foxcroft, 1997).

Test users will just have to start accepting the fact that there is no quick solution in choosing and using psychological tests in the new South Africa (Abrahams, 1994). It would also appear that a balanced approach to test development is required by adapting and norming certain international measures and developing other new and culturally relevant measures (Foxcroft, 1997).

STUDY AIM

The aim of this study was to investigate the implicit perspectives of personality among the Tshivenda speaking people.

METHOD

Research design

A qualitative design in the form of interviews was also used to allow for description and exploration of relationships between the participants and their significant others. According to Kerlinger and Lee (2000), in qualitative research people can be studied in their natural environments. This kind of research approach has to do with the exploration of opinions and attitudes of people. In this research the qualitative research approach is appropriate, since its primary objective is to gather information regarding people in their natural environments as well as the meaning they attach to events of their daily lives.

Participants

The participants were 120 Tshivenda speaking South African mainly from the Limpopo province, and a few others who were originally from Limpopo, but have moved to saty in Gauteng province, because of work commitments. A stratified sampling method has been used in which the Venda speaking people were divided into different strata according to age, gender and socio-economic status. All respondents were asked to participate in the research through personal contacts and snowball sampling. According to Bernard (2000), snowball sampling involves the location of one or more key individuals who are then asked to name others who would be likely candidates for the research.

Table 1

Characteristics of the Participants (n = 120)

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Race	African	120	100
Gender	Male	67	56
	Female	53	44
Age	18-35	72	60
	Older than 35	48	40
Language	Tshivenda	120	100
Province	Limpopo	120	100
Economic Activity	Employed	30	25
	Unemployed	43	36
	Not economically active	47	39

All the respondents were Tshivenda speaking. Table one (1) shows that a total of 56% of participants are males and 44% are females. A total of 60% of respondents fall under the 18 to 35 age group, whereas 40% of respondents are older than 35. A further total of 25% of respondents are employed, while 36% are unemployed and 39% are not economically active.

Participants

This study is part of a larger project that focuses on the different personality structures of 11 cultural groups that are found in South Africa. This study is the first part aimed at investigating the personality structure of the Tshivenda speaking people.

One-on-one interviews were conducted to gather information from the participants. During the interviews, open ended questions were asked, and in each case the whole interview session was tape recorded. The interviewer utilised the audiotape recording equipment to record data during the interviews. However, permission was first obtained from the participants after explaining to them the reasons for using the tape recorder. They were also informed about the issue of confidentiality, and of who would have access to those records. The interviewer also took some field notes during the interviews to ensure that accurate interviews were conducted using the mother tongue language, Tshivenda. This made it easier

for them to understand the questions, and it enabled them to express themselves freely. Clarifications of questions and responses were also given in order to avoid double meanings. After the interviews had been conducted, responses were transcribed from Tshivenda to English. Subsequently they were edited by professional translators or editors.

The following questions were asked from the participants: a) biographical information (name, province, home, municipality, race, gender, age, language, highest qualification and economic activity) and b) descriptions of personalities of grand parent, parent, eldest child or brother or sister, best friend of the same sex, best friend of the opposite sex, a colleague or friend from another ethnical group or a neighbour, a person that you (the respondent) don't like, a teacher or person from the community whom you like and a teacher or person from their community whom you do not like.

Holloway (1997) states that ethical obligation rests with the researcher. The researcher therefore explained to the participants the purpose of the study, the role of the researcher and her identity. In addition, a background of the study was explained, and also what would be done with the data that was obtained. Participation was therefore voluntary, and no one was forced to participate. The information was handled confidentially. In publication of the findings, no names will be linked to any responses.

The interviewer was as neutral and objective as possible to ensure that the data provided by respondents would not be contaminated. Validity and reliability were also ensured. According to Mouton and Marais (1990), reliability is influenced by, among other things, the researcher and the context or the circumstances under which the research is conducted. Reliability was ensured by making sure that interviews were conducted in a manner that was free from distraction. Clear instructions and explanations of the purpose of the study were given to ensure reliability and to encourage honest answers. The researcher maintained neutrality and consistency at all times. The data obtained in this study was compared with the literature on the personality of Tshivenda speaking individuals to ensure that the interpretations that were made were reliable and valid.

To ensure validity the interviewer established some rapport to encourage the participants to share information. The participants could also express themselves freely, since they were using their mother tongue language; this also helped in making sure that the exact meaning of

what they wanted to share was not lost. Questions were also repeated without changing their meaning to ensure that participants understood them, and to make sure that we measured what we purported to measure.

Data analysis

A total of 4 722 personality descriptions were obtained through the interviews. Qualitative analysis was made in order to analyse and interpret data. Qualitative data analysis normally requires the reduction and interpretation of the voluminous amount of information collected. According to Greef (2002), the procedure of qualitative analysis embodies an attempt to capture the richness of themes emerging from participants, instead of reducing the responses to quantitative categories. Content analysis was therefore utilised to examine the content. According to Lin and Church (2004) a content analysis approach helps to discover those personality dimensions that are specific to a particular culture.

The researcher read through all the responses to capture the richness, patterns and categories of the themes. The next step was to remove the double words or items, and to remove superfluous words in the descriptions. Each description was then interpreted to check if it actually involved personality description or not. A total of 342 descriptions were eliminated, because they were not personality descriptions, but included terms describing physical appearance and what people do. All categories were then sorted alphabetically. Those personality descriptions were clustered into themes, and then the number of categories were reduced by grouping categories together in cases in which there was an overlap of meaning. At the end a total of 150 personality characteristics were obtained.

RESULTS

Table 2 presents a list of 150 personality descriptive terms in alphabetical order, and their frequency.

Table 2

List of Personality Descriptive Terms

Personality descriptive	Frequency	Personality descriptive	Frequency
Accepting	18	Difficult	38
Adaptive	1	Diligent	2
Admonish	1	Disciplined	2
Aesthetic	29	Easygoing	9
Ambitious	2	Encouraging	127
Apologetic	1	Energetic	6
Appreciative	11	Enthusiastic	2
Approachable	22	Fair	9
Arrogant	19	Fearful	3
Bold	2	Fierce	7
Calm	1	Firm	1
Careful	2	Forceful	3
Caring	107	Forgetful	2
Cheerful	40	Forgiving	10
Clever	11	Friendly	155
Comforting	3	Generous	87
Committed	3	Gentle	5
Compassionate	8	Hard-hearted	4
Competitor	2	Hardworker	105
Confident	4	Helpful	105
Confused	1	Honest	2
Considerate	6	Hopeful	1
Controlling	2	Humble	41
Cooperative	13	Humour	42
Copycat	1	Hurtles	1
Courageous	2	Impatient	7
Creative	7	Impressive	1
Decision maker	3	In control	1
Dedicated	69	Incompetent	3
Dependant	2	Independent	12
Determined	1	Influential	3

Personality descriptive	Frequency	Personality descriptive	Frequency
Innocent	1	Peaceful	73
Innovative	3	Perfectionist	2
Improvident	3	Perseverance	29
Inquisitive	22	Playful	18
Insightful	3	Polite	61
Intelligent	23	Positive	2
Invert	16	Practical	3
Judgemental	1	Precise	2
Kind	155	Progressive	1
Knowledgeable	4	Overprotective	4
Lazy	66	Proud	3
Leadership	17	Provident	13
Logical	1	Punctual	5
Loner	1	Purposeful	1
Loving	207	Quick	2
Low self-esteem	1	Quite	63
Mature	1	Reliable	16
Meanness	16	Reprimand	8
Misunderstanding	1	Reserved	36
Moody	20	Resourceful	124
Neat	30	Respectful	23
Negative behaviour	1060	Responsible	24
Noisy	2	Risk taker	1
Non classifiable, religion=172	342	Role model	8
Obedient	1	Sacrificing	1
Omniscient	1	Sensitive	4
Open	67	Serious	4
Optimistic	4	Sharing	36
Organised	6	Short tempered	96
Outgoing	37	Shy	8
Overprotective	3	Slow	4
Passionate	1	Snobbish	4
Patent	54	Sober	11

Personality descriptive	Frequency
Sociable	223
Soft	5
Straight talker	22
Strict	52
Strong	4
Successful	5
Supportive	19
Sympathetic	2
Talkative	47
Task oriented	6
Thorough	1
Tolerant	2
Tough	2
Trustworthy	79
Truthful	32
Unclear	3
Understanding	155
Undignified	1
Warm hearted	2
Weak	2
Welcoming	5
Well wisher	3
Total	4722

Following in Table 3 are the 150 personality characteristics that were obtained from the interviews grouped in eight broad categories: interpersonal relatedness, sociability, conscientiousness, emotionality, intellect, meanness, dominance and others.

The following are the broad categories of the personality characteristics, followed by the personality characteristics that led to the labelling of their broad categories.

- Interpersonal relatedness includes appreciative, approachable, adaptable, caring, comforting, compassionate, considerate, cooperative, encouraging, fair, friendly, gentle, helpful, honest, humble, humour, hurtles, impressive, kind, loving, generous, open, patient, respectful, sacrificing, sharing, snobbish, supportive, tolerant, trustworthy, unclear, understanding and welcoming. All these personality characteristics refer to how people relate to one another on an interpersonal level.
- Sociability refers to a preference for companionship, social skills, social stimulation and numerous friendships. Personality characteristics in this category include friendly, sociable, outgoing, adaptive, easygoing, energetic, extraversioned, friendly, independent, introversioned, loner-like, noisy, outgoing, passionate, playful, practical, quick, quiet, reserved, shy, sociable, slow, task-oriented and warm-hearted.
- Conscientiousness refers to a strong sense of purpose and high inspiration levels. Personality characteristics in this category include ambitious, apologetic, bold, careful, committed, competitive, confident, courageous, in the nature of a decision-maker, dedicated, dependent, determined, diligent, disciplined, firm, forgetful hardworking, hard-hearted, independent, influential, precise, lazy, in the nature of a leader, obedient, optimistic, organised, perfectionist, persevering, positive, progressive, proud, punctual, purposeful, responsible, reliable, religious, in the nature of a risk taker, in the nature of a role model, sober, successful and thorough.
- Emotionality refers to the experiences and feelings that Venda people experience. This includes cheerful, calm, confused, emotional, enthusiastic, fearful, fierce, impatient, moody, patient, peaceful, sensitive and short-tempered.
- Personality characteristics in the category of intellect includes creative, clever, insightful, intelligent, logical, knowledgeable, innovative and resourceful.

- The category of meanness is characterised by a negative way of interaction. Personality characteristics in this category include admonitory, aesthetic, discriminative, difficult, gossipy, greedy, judgemental, jealous, mean, inclined to negative behaviour, strict, stingy, inclined to substance abuse and overprotective.
- The category of dominance has to do with the control that we exercise in relationships. The characteristics in this category include arrogant, controlling, provident and forceful, in control, serious, strong, improvident and tough.
- Other personality characteristics that do not fall under any of these categories categorised under others. This includes copycatting, acting as a role model, incompetence, innocence, weakness, well-wishing and softness.

It is important to take note, as is demonstrated in Table 3, that the Venda people value interpersonal relationship very deeply, since most of the characteristics mentioned are mainly related to interpersonal relatedness in a positive way, and meanness in a negative way. Consider further that interpersonal relatedness is also the sociability characteristic that many participants mention. The Vhavenda people also have a strong sense of purpose and inspiration levels. The category of conscientiousness and in particular their hardworking characteristics and religious nature can be confirmed. It is important to mention further their emotionality: just like any other culture they go through many emotions that range from being cheerful to being fearful and moody.

Table 3

Categorisation of the Vhavenda Personality

Interpersonal relatedness	Sociability	Conscientious	Emotionality	Intellect	Meanness	Dominance	Other
Accepting	Adaptive	Apologetic	Cheerful	Clever	Admonitory	Arrogance	Copypat
Appreciative	Energetic	Bold	Calm	Creative	Aesthetic	Controlling	Practical
Approachable	Extraversion	Competitor	Confused	Insightful	Discriminative	Provident	Role model
Caring	Easygoing	Careful	Fearful	Intelligent	Difficult	Forceful	Incompetent
Comforting	Friendly	Dedicated	Fierce	Logical	Gossip	In control	Innocent
Compassionate	Independence	Determined	Emotional	Knowledgeable	Greedy	Serious	Weak
Considerate	Introversion	Diligent	Enthusiastic	Resourceful	Judgement	Strong	Well wisher
Cooperative	Loner	Disciplined	Impatient	Innovative	Jealousy	Improvident	Soft
Encouraging	Noisiness	Decision making	Patient		Meanness	Tough	
Fair	Outgoing		Peaceful		Negative behaviour		
Forgiving	Passionate	Hard working	Moody		Strict		
Friendly	Playful	Leadership	Sensitive		Stingy		
Gentle	Practical	Lazy	Short tempered		Substance abuse		
Helpful	Reserved	Obedient			Overprotective		
Honest	Quick	Organised					
Humble	Quite	Perfectionist					
Humour	Shyness	Reliable					
Hurtles	Sociable	Religious					
Impressive	Slow	Proud					
Kind	Task oriented	Punctual					
Loving	Warm-hearted	Perseverance					
Generous		Sober					
Openness		Hard hearted					
Welcoming		Committed					
Respectful		Forgetful					
Sacrificing		Dependant					
Sharing		Precise					
Snobbish		Responsible					
Supportive		Risk taker					
Trustworthy		Role model					
Tolerant		Thorough					
Unclear		Firm					
Understanding		Influential					
		Ambitious					
		Successful					
		Optimistic					
		Progressive					
		Positive					
		Purposeful					
		Courageous					

DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to determine the implicit perspectives of personality of the Tshivenda speaking people. Among all the personality characteristics sociability receives the majority of personality descriptors (223), followed by loving (207) and religious (172), and then on an equal basis by kind, friendly and understanding (155). Other characteristics that have many descriptors are encouraging (127), resourceful (124), caring (107), hardworking and helpful (105), followed by short tempered (96), generous (87), trustworthy, dedicated

(69), peaceful (72), lazy (66), open (67), quiet (63), polite (61), strict (52), talkative (47), humorous (42), humble (41), cheerful (40), difficult (38), outgoing (37), reserved (36), sharing (36), cultural (33), truthful (32) and neat (30). The remaining personality characteristics receive less than 30 descriptors.

Most of personality descriptors obtained in the study clearly indicate that the Tshivenda speaking people are very keen on interpersonal relations, and they are also sociable. This is evident when one looks at how the Vhavenda families are normally structured with immediate and extended family members. It is evident further in how they maintain good relations with neighbours and other people in the same community or village. They tend to relate well to others and they treat each other like family. These recognitions merely give an indication of how relationships are valued in the Vhavenda culture. Valuing relations also becomes part of the culture from a very young age, since girls and boys go through traditional rituals and ceremonies in which they are taught how to relate and behave to others. Respect is also emphasised and valued in relating to other people.

Very important to the Vhavenda people is also giving advice to the young ones: not only one's own children, but also young ones from the larger community. This is labelled for the purposes of this study as resourcefulness. More inculcation of resourcefulness also tends to happen at those traditional ceremonies and in the evening during storytelling (Milubi, 2005). These matters are also related to the resourcefulness that has been mentioned as personality descriptors, and they play an important role in encouraging the young people to behave well.

Other personality characteristics that come out strongly are those labelled hardworking and helpful. This indicates that the Vhavenda people have a strong sense of purpose and high levels of inspiration. The Vhavenda people are hardworking people who devote their energies to agriculture, in particular and mainly stock and crop farming (West, 1996). This has been mainly dominant in the past when these were also means of making a living. Religion is also highly valued in the Vhavenda families: many responses refer to belief in God, and also belief in their culture.

It is important to mention further the generosity and willingness of the Vhavenda to share. These traits go along with their helpfulness, love and care for others. It has always been

known in the Venda family that you cannot go hungry, because they are generous with their food which they obtain mainly by ploughing their fields.

Like in any other culture the Vhavenda people also go through many emotions ranging from cheerfulness to defeat, as has been indicated. They can celebrate and be happy especially in ceremonies like marriages, traditions and they also mourn in times of death.

Comparison of the Vhavenda people personality perspectives and the five factor model (FFM) (Digman, 1990; John, 1989) shows that the latter does not cover all of the important personality factors in the Vhavenda culture. The extraversion dimension of the FFM corresponds with the characteristics extroversion, introversion, energetic, talkative, independence and sociable, and the conscientiousness dimension of the FFM corresponds with characteristics such as dependability, carefulness, thoroughness, responsibility, being organised, hardworking and persevering. It further shows very few characteristics of openness on the five factor model that correspond with that of the Vhavenda people personality perspective, as has been stated, except for a few personality characteristics that are labelled under the category intellect including the qualities named intelligent, insightful, logical, creative, clever and innovative. This again confirms the finding that the interpersonal relatedness factor in the Vhavenda personality characteristic is culturally determined as derived from the Vhavenda culture, while the Western five factor model fails to cover it.

There are limitations to this study. Firstly, the study population focuses on the Venda speaking people from some of the villages in the Thohoyandou district in Venda, and in Pretoria at the Gauteng Province. This means that the results may not be representative of all Tshivenda speaking people. Results obtained with these 120 Tshivenda speaking people cannot be generalised for the whole Vhavenda population in South Africa. Secondly, some of the words in English do not really represent the exact meaning that they enjoy in Tshivenda. Thirdly, there is a possibility that the meaning of some of the personality descriptive terms have been lost between the initial interview with the participants and transcription into the English language. However, professional translators edited the translations to make sure that they are of good quality.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For future research it is recommended that a bigger sample should be used which will include Tshivenda speaking people from other districts in Venda and from other provinces. It is also recommended that future research should focus on reducing the broad categories of the personality descriptive to group them into fewer categories, while retaining the original meaning of the personality items.

The results of this study can be used together with that of other language groups in South Africa to develop a personality questionnaire that is based on South African cultures.

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CHAPTER 3

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter comprises conclusions regarding the literature study review and the results of the empirical study. Furthermore, it outlines the limitations of this project, followed by recommendations for future research.

3.1 CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions are set under the specific objectives of this study.

As far as conceptualization of personality based on the literature study goes, it is important to mention first that psychologists do not agree on one answer to the definition of personality (Burger, 1986). Personality has also been defined in many different ways. Most uses of the term can be summarised in terms of two major themes (Allport, 1937). One meaning of the term originates from the perspective of an observer, and its second sense refers to the inner self or being. Important to the history and field of personality are personality theories. Personality theories can be classified generally into five categories: the psychodynamic approach, the cognitive approach, the behavioural/learning approach, the humanistic approach and the trait approach. All these approaches differ in their basic assumptions about human behaviour, and are distinguished from others mainly by their assumptions and their focus as well as by the methods they use to assess personality and treat problem behaviours.

These personality theories are furthermore divided into two major categories: the first is the group of descriptive theories which tend to describe personality in terms of characteristics, while the second is the group of causative theories which tend to take account for how personality traits are acquired (Delrega, Winstead, & Jones, 2005).

The focus of this study is on descriptive theories or trait theories. Allport can be seen as the founding father of trait theories. His emphasis is upon the so-called within organism process, because he saw behaviour as determined by a complex inner system (Allport, 1937). Personality traits are therefore regarded in this study as the best psychophysical system to describe the personality of an individual.

A second important consideration is to determine the extent to which the personality structure found in Western studies is suitable for the Venda cultural group.

Out of the 4 722 personality descriptors obtained, 150 categories of different personality characteristics were configured. These characteristics were further divided into the following eight categories: interpersonal relatedness, sociability, conscientiousness, emotionality, meanness, intellect, dominance and others. It was evident in both the literature and empirical study that the Vhavenda people have strong interpersonal relations, and they are also sociable with one another. Relationships are therefore valued in the Vhavenda culture, and this becomes part of the culture from a very young age through traditional rituals and ceremonies in which young ones are taught how to relate and behave.

It also came out both in this study and the literature review that the Vhavenda people are resourceful. They give advice to one another and especially to the young ones from within the community at large. Inculcation of these values also occurs at traditional ceremonies and in the evening during story telling (Milubi, 2005).

The Vhavenda people have a strong sense of purpose and they are highly inspirational. These recognitions are again confirmed both the study and in the literature: Vhavenda are hardworking people who devote their energies to agriculture (West, 1996).

Comparison of Tshivenda speaking people and the Big Five gives evidence of the following traits: extraversion, conscientiousness, neuroticism. Very few characteristics related to openness in the Big Five correspond with that of the Vhavenda personality perspective, with the exception of a few personality characteristics that were labelled under intellect. It was found that the interpersonal relatedness factor in the Vhavenda personality characteristic is not covered by the Western five factor model. The five factor model therefore does not cover all the important personality factors in the Vhavenda culture.

A third crucial consideration is to determine the unique personality factors of the Tshivenda-speaking people. Personality characteristic that emerged and are indicative of the Tshivenda speaking people's uniqueness are reflected in personality characteristics like the following: hardworking, religious, generous, caring, compassionate, helpful, fair, friendly, understanding, appreciative, encouraging and supportive. All these relate to how they relate

with one another. This interpersonal relatedness was one of the unique categorisations found, in some contrast to the five factor model. This is because it has been interpreted as a cultural factor that was derived solely from the Vhavenda culture.

The other unique characteristics include the strong sense of purpose and highly inspirational characteristics which evident in the study in a considerable number of responses related to the quality of being hard working and belief in God.

Resourcefulness also emerged as one of the unique personality characteristic in the Vhavenda culture, since it indicated how they groom their young ones from an early stage by giving them advice.

3.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following limitations emerged during the study:

The study population focused on the Tshivenda speaking people from some of the villages in the Thohoyandou district in Venda and in Pretoria at the Gauteng Province. This amounts to a limitation in the sense that the results may not be representative of all Tshivenda speaking people in South Africa.

The sample size of 120 was relatively small compared to about 839 000 of the total population of the Tshivenda speaking group (Statistics South Africa, 2003). Although 120 might be a small sample size for quantitative research it is sufficient for qualitative research (Neuman, 2001). Results coming out of the study with 120 Tshivenda speaking people can therefore not be generalised for the rest of Vhavenda population in South Africa.

It was also found that some of the words in English do not really give the exact meaning as it is found among Tshivenda. For example, Tshivenda speakers say *u na mafunda* which can be loosely translated into English as sharing or generosity. Yet this does not really depict the meaning that is conveyed by the Tshivenda word *mafunda*. In the Vhavenda culture it really refers to somebody who is giving and sharing in terms of food and traditional or cultural food or possessions that he/she might be having.

The other example is of the phrase *mulimi wa biko* which has been translated to English as hardworking. In English the term conveys a more general term of working hard, while this is not necessarily what the respondents intended to convey, since they had in mind a hardworking farmer. However, accredited language experts were consulted who confirmed that it is true that it does not really convey the complete meaning, while at times real meanings can be lost in transcribing from the Tshivenda language to English. Nonetheless it was necessary to make use of this standard way of communicating these words.

The other limitation is the subjective interpretation of the personality descriptors when categories were formed. However, guidance from professionals in the field was received to make sure that the quality was good.

3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations can be made with regard to future research.

- It is recommended that a bigger sample should be used which will include Tshivenda speaking people from other districts in Venda, and original Venda speaking people from other provinces.
- It is also recommended that future research can focus on reducing the 150 personality characteristics to form less categories, without losing important items that are relevant to the Tshivenda speaking group.
- The results of this study can be used together with that of other language groups in South Africa to develop a personality questionnaire that is valid and reliable for South African cultures.

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