To which extent do personal characteristics influence dishonesty and authenticity on the work floor?

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Abstract

Lying is part of every social life (DePaulo et al., 1996) and excels between the ages of 18 and 29 (Debey et al., 2015). Lying could be problematic as the discovery of deception tends to be an intense and predominantly negative emotional experience, which erodes trust and harms relationships (McCornack & Levine, 1990). The peak in lying coincides with the period when individuals start working, making it reasonable to assume that some lies might be told in the office. Although the tendency to lie is part of personality (Sarzyńska et al., 2017), literature on when and how people lie in the office is limited. Therefore, this paper investigates how personality traits affect deception on the work floor. An online questionnaire was distributed among 119 participants. All participants needed to fill in a personality test and were shown five vignettes about hypothetical situations at work. They were asked to imagine that these situations happened to them and indicate how they intended to respond. Participants' intentions to give a dishonest or honest answer were used as the dependent variable in an ordinal logistic regression analysis. As hypothesized, it was found that individuals who scored high on the personality traits Honesty-Humility, Conscientiousness and Openness to Experience deceived significantly less than people with lower scores. Furthermore, individuals' Emotionality was positively correlated with the number of lies told.

HEXACO, personality, deception, work floor, office

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Introduction

Everybody lies, on average, once or twice a day (DePaulo et al., 1996). A more recent study from Serota et al. (2010) confirms this; they find that the average rate of lying is around 1.65 lies per day. However, a critical addition is that most of the lies are told by the minority of the population (Serota et al., 2010). Lying starts once the inhibitory control increases in a person and excels in young adulthood, between the ages of 18 and 29, before it worsens throughout the rest of adulthood (Debey et al., 2015).

Individuals may experience different emotions when lying. The three most common are guilt, fear, and excitement (Ekman, 1992). For example, individuals can feel guilty because they know they are doing things that are not allowed, afraid because they know they can get caught, or excited because they have the chance to mislead someone (Vrij & Mann, 2001). The degree to which individuals experience these emotions depends on the circumstances (Vrij et al., 2010). For instance, individuals will experience these emotions to a lesser extent when they tell lies to benefit others. Individuals indicated that when they tell lies to benefit others, meaning protecting them from embarrassment, misery or hurting their feelings, they worry more about protecting the other person's feelings than their own (DePaulo et al., 1996).

Several factors influence whether people decide to lie or to be honest. One of these factors is individuals' self-presentation goal. Feldman et al. (2002) found, for example, that when people aim to come across as competent or likeable, they tell an average of 1.75 lies in 10 minutes. Furthermore, Weiss and Feldman (2006) found that individuals tell an average of 2.19 lies in a 15-minute job interview. Comparing these results to dairy studies conducted by DePaulo et al. (1996) that examined lying in everyday life shows that individuals with a clear self-presentation goal lie more than the average of one or two lies a day.

Someone's attempt to portray themselves as a good person, also known as Impression Management, can either be used deceptively or nondeceptively (Schneider et al., 2015). In nondeceptive ways, individuals focus on the aspects of themselves which are the most relevant to the occurring interaction without being designed to deceive (DePaulo et al., 1996). Whereas in deceptive ways, individuals deliberately define characteristics to deceive other individuals (DePaulo et al., 1996). Individuals use deceptive Impression Management to a great extent in the employment interview, which ultimately increases their chances of being hired (Schneider et al., 2015).

Another factor influencing whether people decide to lie or be honest is intelligence. Although intelligence is not the most crucial factor which affects the decision to lie or not,

Sarzyńska et al. (2017) believe intelligence does set barriers because less intelligent people either do not have a fortunate lying history or perceive deception as less beneficial.

Finally, the tendency to lie is part of personality, as each individual has a different attitude towards lying in specific situations (Sarzyńska et al., 2017; Weiss & Feldman, 2006). For example, Sarzyńska et al. (2017) and Weiss and Feldman (2006) found that extraversion positively correlates with the lying frequency. Furthermore, Kashy and DePaulo (1996) found that Machiavellianism positively correlates with the number of lies told, and Jonason et al. (2014) found that besides Machiavellianism, psychopathy was also linked to telling more lies. Therefore it makes sense to include personality as a factor when conducting deception research.

While a considerable portion of the existing research studies on deception and personality focused on lying during employment interviews, the research on when and how people lie after being hired is limited, resulting in a literature gap. Moreover, as the peak of lying coincides with the period when individuals start working, certain lies might be told in the office, especially with full-time employment, as it means individuals spend most of their awake time at the office. It is also reasonable to assume that young adults want to appear likeable and competent at the office, which is known to increase lying (Feldman et al., 2002). Hence, this peak of lying could become problematic for bosses, managers or other co-workers, as the discovery of deception tends to be an intense and overwhelmingly negative emotional experience that undermines trust and damages relationships (McCornack & Levine, 1990). Therefore the following research question is constructed:

RQ: "How do personality traits affect deception on the work floor?"

This research is not only of scientific importance but also holds a high practical value for employers and managers dealing with potentially dishonest personnel.

In order to test how personality traits affect deception on the work floor, a survey was designed and conducted. The survey consisted of three parts and started with the HEXACO model to assess the respondents' scores on specific pre-designed personality traits. The second part of the survey was a vignette study that asked participants to imagine hypothetical situations on the work floor and subsequently asked how they would respond in those specific situations. Finally, the survey concluded with questions based on demographics, such as age, gender, nationality and work experience. The data was extracted to run an ordinal logistic regression analysis with respondents' intention to give a dishonest or honest answer as the dependent variable.

Literature review

Deception

Deception occurs when an individual knowingly and intentionally tries to mislead another person (Serota et al., 2010). According to Bok's (1999) principle of veracity, a moral asymmetry exists between being truthful and deceitful, meaning that deception requires justification while being truthful does not. In addition, Levine et al. (2010) found that the principle of veracity is central in everyday communication and that individuals only lie to one another when the truth becomes an obstacle. The abovementioned would mean that people need a reason to lie.

That people need a reason to lie seems reasonable as several studies focussed on the classification of lies. For example, Turner et al. (1975) developed five reasons to justify and distort information. These reasons were Face, Relationship, Exploitation, Avoid tension/conflict and Situational control (Turner et al., 1975). Furthermore, Metts (1989) found four primary categories of justification with a total of 15 specific motives. The four primary categories Metts (1989) found were Partner-focused, Teller-focused, Relationship-focused and Issue-focused. More recently, Levine et al. (2016) developed a list of ten pan-cultural deception motives. These ten motives were Personal transgression, Economic advantage, Non-monetary personal advantage, Social-polite, Altruistic lies, Self-impression management, Malicious, Humour-joke, Pathological lies and Avoidance (Levine et al., 2016).

The observation that people need a reason to lie is also consistent with the predictions of the Truth Default Theory. The essential behind Truth Default Theory is that lean toward being truth-bias and that other individuals only use deception as the truth becomes a hindrance (Levine, 2014). Truth-bias means that people assume that the people around them communicate without lying most of the time (Levine, 2014). It is a bias because truths are judged substantially more correctly than lies (Levine et al., 1999). Furthermore, the second part of the Truth Default Theory means that deception is never the ultimate goal; it is only used as a tactic when truthful communication poses a hindrance to goal attainment (Levine et al., 2010; Levine, 2014).

Personality

For a long time, the Five Factor Model, also known as the Big Five, was the most explanatory personality test. The Big Five was initially derived from English linguistic research to identify the fundamental personality domains (Ashton & Lee, 2001; Widiger & Lowe, 2007). How meaningful a specific personality trait is, is determined by the quantity of terms a language has developed to illustrate the various degrees and nuances of that trait (Widiger & Lowe, 2007).

The Big Five consist of five independent personality dimensions: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Openness to Experience (Goldberg, 1993). A shortcoming of the Big Five is that the five variables cannot satisfactorily explain the pattern of covariation among the Dark Triad because Agreeableness is the only variable modestly correlated with the Dark Triad (Lee & Ashton, 2005; Paulhus & Williams, 2002).

The Dark Triad of personality includes Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy. People with high levels of Machiavellianism tend to tell more blatant and selfish lies, just as they are more likely to behave cold and manipulate than those with low levels of Machiavellianism (Paulhus & Williams, 2002; Sarzyńska et al., 2017). Correspondingly, people with high levels of narcissism tend to lie more about self-interest than those with low levels of narcissism (Sarzyńska et al., 2017). Finally, people with high levels of psychopathy are more likely to lie for no particular reason, just as they are very impulsive and thrill-seeking, along with low empathy and anxiety compared with those with low levels of psychopathy (Paulhus & Williams, 2002; Sarzyńska et al., 2017). Although these three personality traits overlap, they are still stand-alone personality constructs (Lee & Ashton, 2005; Paulhus & Williams, 2002).

More recently, cross-cultural linguistic research showed six different independent personality dimensions instead of five (De Vries et al., 2009). Interestingly, this new six-faith model, also known as the HEXACO model, has outperformed the Big Five in explaining some of the criteria related to anti-social and selfish behaviours, such as the Dark Triad personality traits (De Vries, 2013; Lee & Ashton, 2005). The aforementioned makes the HEXACO model the most explanatory personality test of this moment (De Vries et al., 2009). Compared with the Big Five, the HEXACO model added the Honesty-Humility dimension and reorganised the axes for Agreeableness and Emotionality (De Vries et al., 2009). The name HEXACO is derived from the (initial) letters of the six personality dimensions; Honesty-Humility, Emotionality, eXtraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Openness to Experience.

Honesty-Humility

The Honesty-Humility dimension refers to how sincere, fair, greed-avoiding and modest individuals are (De Vries et al., 2009). Individuals who score high on Honesty-Humility are thus more honest and humble than individuals who score low on Honesty-Humility. In addition, individuals who score high on Honesty-Humility are more hesitant to manipulate others or break the rules than individuals who score low on Honesty-Humility (De Vries et al., 2009).

Therefore, it was no surprise that McLeod and Genereux (2008) found Honesty-Humility and the likelihood of lying to be negatively correlated. This leads to the first hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1: *People who score high on Honesty-Humility deceive less than those who score low.*

Emotionality

The Emotionality dimension refers to how fearful, anxious, dependent and sentimental individuals are (De Vries et al., 2009). Individuals who score high on Emotionality are thus more anxious and nervous than those who score low. In addition, individuals who score high on Emotionality need more emotional support and are more likely to feel empathy for others than individuals who score low on Emotionality (De Vries et al., 2009).

According to previous research from Kashy and DePaulo (1996), individuals with high social anxiety lacked the self-confidence to say what they felt when that was not what others wanted to hear. Therefore, the likelihood of an individual who scores high on the Emotionality dimension telling more lies, including in the office, is significant. This leads to the second hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2: *People who score high on Emotionality deceive more than those who score low.*

Extraversion

The Extraversion dimension refers to the extent to which individuals enjoy life, value themselves, seek out social situations and feel comfortable in such cases (De Vries et al., 2009). Individuals who score high on Extraversion are thus more likely to have a positive attitude towards themselves and appreciate social gatherings and interactions more than individuals who score low on Extraversion. In addition, individuals who score high on Extraversion feel relatively more at ease when leading or presenting in front of a group of people than individuals who score low on Extraversion (De Vries et al., 2009).

According to previous research from Sarzyńska et al. (2017), an individual who scored high on Extraversion told more lies in comparison with someone who scored low on Extraversion. This means that Extraversion correlates positively with the number of lies told.

In addition, Weiss and Feldman (2006) found the same positive correlation between Extraversion and the number of lies told during job interviews. Therefore, it is likely that an individual who scores high on the Extraversion dimension would also tell more lies in the office. This leads to the third hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3: *People who score high on Extraversion deceive more than those who score low.*

Agreeableness

The Agreeableness dimension refers to how forgiving, gentle, flexible and patient individuals are (De Vries et al., 2009). Individuals who score high on Agreeableness are thus more peaceful and understanding than individuals who score low. In addition, individuals who score high on Agreeableness tend to compromise and cooperate more with others, judge others milder, and forgive injustice more than individuals who score low on Agreeableness (De Vries et al., 2009).

According to previous research from Sarzyńska et al. (2017), an individual who scored high on Agreeableness told fewer lies than someone who scored low on Agreeableness. This means that Agreeableness correlates negatively with the number of lies described. Therefore, it is likely that an individual who scores high on the Agreeableness dimension would tell fewer lies in the office. This leads to the fourth hypothesis.

Hypothesis 4: *People who score high on Agreeableness deceive less than those who score low.*

Conscientiousness

The Conscientiousness dimension refers to how orderly, diligent, perfectionist and prudent individuals are (De Vries et al., 2009). Individuals who score high on Conscientiousness are thus more goal-oriented and strive more for perfection than individuals who score low. In addition, individuals who score high on Conscientiousness are more likely to organise things than individuals who score low on Conscientiousness (De Vries et al., 2009).

According to previous research from Sarzyńska et al. (2017), an individual who scored high on Conscientiousness told fewer lies than someone who scored low on Conscientiousness. This means that Conscientiousness correlates negatively with the number of lies described.

Therefore, it is likely that an individual who scores high on the Conscientiousness dimension would tell fewer lies in the office. This leads to the fifth hypothesis.

Hypothesis 5: *People who score high on Conscientiousness deceive less than those who score low.*

Openness to Experience

The Openness to Experience dimension refers to how inquisitive, creative and unconventional individuals are (De Vries et al., 2009). Individuals who score high on Openness to Experience are thus more likely to be curious about many things and interested in strange ideas and people than individuals who score low. In addition, individuals who score high on Openness to Experience tend to enjoy art and nature more than individuals who score low on Openness to Experience (De Vries et al., 2009).

According to previous research from Sarzyńska et al. (2017), individuals who scored high on Openness to Experience told more lies than individuals who scored low on Openness to Experience. This means that Openness to Experience correlates positively with the number of lies described. Therefore, it is likely that an individual who scores high on the Openness to Experience dimension would also tell more lies in the office. This leads to the sixth hypothesis.

Hypothesis 6: *People who score high on Openness to Experience deceive more than those who score low.*

Methodology

Experimental design

An online questionnaire was designed and spread among social media channels. The questionnaire aimed to observe how different personality traits affect deception on the work floor.

The questionnaire started with an introduction and consisted of three parts. The first part was a personality test, which was the same for all the participants. The second part of the questionnaire was a vignette study. Participants got to see different vignettes that asked them to imagine hypothetical situations on the work floor and that this had happened to them before asking how likely they would be to give an honest or dishonest response in that specific

situation. All respondents were shown five different vignettes where the situation differed. These different situations were about feelings, knowledge, actions, explanations and facts. Furthermore, the person they were communicating with and how they communicated also altered between vignettes. This ultimately resulted in nine separated vignettes, or nine different hypothetical situations, per situation. Which vignette participants were shown per situation was presented randomly. Finally, the questionnaire ended with demographic questions about age, gender, nationality, education, and work experience, all of which were similar for everybody. When participants reported having previous work experience, they were asked two additional questions about the size of the organisation they worked for and whether they were in charge of other people. The complete questionnaire is reported in the Appendix.

After the questionnaire was closed and the raw data was cleaned, an ordinal logistic regression analysis was performed with participants' intention to give a dishonest or honest response as the dependent variable. The situation, the individual receiving the response and the modality were included in this ordinal logistic regression as independent variables, together with Honesty-Humility, Emotionality, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Openness to Experience, Age, Gender, Nationality, Education, Work experience, Organisation, and In charge as control variables.

Stages in detail

Brief HEXACO Inventory

The questionnaire started with a personality test. As the HEXACO model is better at predicting some crucial variables in psychology than the Big Five (Lee et al., 2005), that model is chosen here. Several versions of the HEXACO model exist, ranging from 24 to 208 questions (De Vries et al., 2009). This research used the Brief HEXACO Inventory (BHI) to ensure that participants would complete the entire survey and not stop halfway through. The BHI consists of 24 questions, four questions per personality trait, and would take participants approximately two to three minutes to complete (De Vries, 2013). In contrast, the HEXACO-60 consists of 60 questions, ten questions per personality trait, and would take participants substantially longer to complete (De Vries et al., 2009). Furthermore, De Vries (2013) found that although relatively low alpha reliability characterises the BHI, the test-retest stability and self-other agreement were relatively high, together with merging correlations with full-length scales. In addition, the validity loss of the BHI is only moderate (De Vries et al., 2009). Therefore, short personality

scales, the BHI in this case, are beneficial when individuals need to fill out lengthy surveys with numerous constructs (De Vries, 2013).

Participants were asked on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from (1) Strongly disagree to (5) Strongly agree, to which extent they agreed with the 24 statements of the BHI. As expected, the internal consistency of these items was "unacceptable", as indicated by the low Cronbach's alpha of 0.22. Generally, Cronbach's alpha should be at least 0.70 (Lavrakas, 2008). The 24 statements from the BHI can be found in the Appendix. These 24 statements were placed in a fixed order, as the abbreviated HEXACO-PI-R and the HEXACO-60 are also in a fixed order (De Vries et al., 2009).

Vignette study

The second part of the survey was a vignette study. All participants got to see five different vignettes about hypothetical situations and were requested to conceptualise these situations on their work floor. Subsequently, participants were asked to rate the likelihood of giving either a dishonest or honest response in the respective situations.

Five situations and two other reporting characteristics were manipulated across vignettes. The first manipulation concerned the situation based on DePaulo et al.'s taxonomy (1996). DePaulo et al. (1996) divided the content of the situation in which individuals lie into five categories; Feelings, Knowledge and achievements, Actions, plans, and whereabouts, Explanations and reasons and Facts and possessions. Table 1 shows these different categories and their definition.

Second, the individual receiving the response was altered between vignettes. The aforementioned could be the individuals (1) boss, (2) peer, or (3) subordinate. DePaulo and Kashy (1998) found that individuals told fewer lies to those with whom they felt a closer relationship. It is, therefore, interesting to test how this relationship transfers to the work floor.

The final manipulation that was altered between vignettes was the modality of responding to the situation and if that was through (1) email, SMS or WhatsApp contact, (2) a phone call, or (3) an in-person conversation. DePaulo et al. (1996) found that people try not to use closer communication modalities, such as in-person conversations, when telling lies. Therefore, it is expected that people are more likely to give a dishonest response when they communicate through email, SMS or WhatsApp compared to a phone call or an in-person conversation. Figures 1 to 5 show the five different situations and the different manipulations between the situations.

Table 1 *Taxonomy of Lies*

Content	Definition
Feelings	Lies about affects, emotions, opinions, and evaluations pertaining to people, objects, or events.
Knowledge, Achievements	Lies about achievements, accomplishments, failures, shortcomings, knowledge, and lack of knowledge.
Actions, plans, whereabouts	Lies about what the liars did, are doing, or are planning to do, or about where they were of where they are.
Explanations, reasons	Lies about liars' reasons or explanations for their behaviour.
Facts, possessions	Lies about facts about objects, events, or people, or about possessions.

Source: DePaulo et al. (1996)

Participants were asked to indicate how likely they would be to give a dishonest or honest response to the vignettes they were shown, choosing from a five-point Likert scale ranging from (1) Completely dishonest to (5) Completely honest. Participants who answered (1) Completely dishonest or (2) Dishonest were then asked what their main reason was for giving a dishonest response. Participants could choose from a list with several deception motives and the option 'Other'. The deception motives chosen were those developed by Levine et al. (2016). Participants who answered 3 (Neutral) were not shown an additional question. Finally, participants who answered (4) Honest or (5) Completely honest were asked their main reason for not giving a dishonest response. Here, a self-constructed list of motives was used as much of the existing research focused on why people lie instead of telling the truth. This list also included the option 'Other'. Tables 4 and 5 show the lists of reasons participants could choose.

Figure 1 Feelings vignette

> You have *email, SMS or WhatsApp contact / a phone call / a in-person conversation* with your *subordinate / peer / boss*.
>
> Earlier that morning, there was a meeting with your whole team where your *subordinate / peer / boss* had to present. You didn't think it went very well.
>
> Now your *subordinate / peer / boss* asks you how you thought it went.

Figure 2 Knowledge vignette

> You have *email, SMS or WhatsApp contact / a phone call / a in-person conversation* with your *subordinate / peer / boss*.
>
> A colleague has given you a convenient Excel file that you can also use in your team.
>
> Your *subordinate / peer / boss* is very enthusiastic about it and asks if you made it yourself

Figure 3 Actions vignette

> You have *email, SMS or WhatsApp contact / a phone call / a in-person conversation* with your *subordinate / peer / boss*.
>
> Your *subordinate / peer / boss* asks you if you have anything nice planned for the weekend. However, at this point, you have nothing planned.

Figure 4 Explanations vignette

> You have *email, SMS or WhatsApp contact / a phone call / a in-person conversation* with your *subordinate / peer / boss*.
>
> At the end of the day, you have an important meeting. Unfortunately, you have not yet prepared for this meeting because you forgot about it and now you don't have enough time to prepare for it. Therefore, you decide to move the meeting to a later moment in time.
>
> Your *subordinate / peer / boss* asks you the reason why this meeting has to be moved.

Figure 5 Facts vignette

> You have *email, SMS or WhatsApp contact / a phone call / a in-person conversation* with your *subordinate / peer / boss*.
>
> Your *subordinate / peer / boss* asks you how much overtime you have worked in the past month. Because your *subordinate / peer / boss* has to enter this into the system. You will receive your overtime paid in full.

Demographics

The questionnaire concluded with questions based on demographics to avoid priming effects and because those were the least mentally draining questions. The first of these control variables was the variable Age, where participants were asked to indicate their age in years. Debey et al. (2015) found that lying excelled in young adulthood, after which it decreases again. Therefore, the indicated ages in years of the participants were later categorised into four categories matching the ones from Debey et al. (2015) to expect a similar pattern. These categories were

(1) Young adulthood, the ages between 18 and 29, (2) Midadulthood, the ages between 30 and 44, (3) Older adulthood, the ages between 45 and 59 and (4) Senior age 60 and over.

The following control variable was the nominal variable Gender, where participants were asked to choose between (1) Male, (2) Female, (3) Non-binary/third gender, and (4) Prefer not to say. It is expected that gender does not affect the intention to give a dishonest or honest answer as men and women generally lie in the same quantity (DePaulo et al., 1996; Feldman et al., 2002). However, it has been shown that men and women deceive in different ways (DePaulo et al., 1996; Feldman et al., 2002).

For the control variable Nationality, a drop-down menu was created for participants to indicate their nationality. Fell et al. (2015) found considerable cross-cultural differences in attitudes towards faking. It is, therefore, interesting to test whether participants from the Netherlands have a different intention to give a dishonest or honest answer than other nationalities. For this reason, the categories (1) Dutch and (2) Non Dutch were created.

The control variable Education was measured on an ordinal scale ranging from (1) Primary school to (7) PhD or higher; with (8) Prefer not to say and (9) Other. Participants were asked to indicate the highest level of education they had completed. Sarzyńska et al. (2017) found that less intelligent individuals were less likely to deceive. Therefore it is expected that individuals with a higher education level have a higher intention to give a dishonest answer. The chosen education levels follow a typically Dutch system. However, although the entire questionnaire was in English, it was expected that most participants would be Dutch, ensuring that this system would not give any problems. This was confirmed when nobody chose the option 'Other'.

Work experience was also measured on an ordinal scale. Participants were presented with the following options when asked to indicate whether they had any work experience; (1) No, (2) Yes, part-time max. 8 hours per week, (3) Yes, part-time max. 16 hours, (4) Yes, part-time max. 24 hours, (5) Yes, part-time max. 32 hours or (6) Yes, full-time. This scale was chosen because the majority of the citizens of the Netherlands retire without working full-time. The variable Work experience was included to test whether the intention to give a dishonest or honest answer differed between individuals who had never worked before and those who participate or have participated in the job market.

The ordinal control variable Organisation asked participants who stated they had any type of work experience in the previous question to indicate the size of the organisation where they had worked. Participants could choose between (1) Less than 10 employees, (2) Less than 50 employees, (3) Less than 250 employees and (4) More than 250 employees; reflecting micro,

small, medium, and large companies. DePaulo and Kashy (1998) found that individuals told fewer lies to persons with whom they felt a closer relationship. Therefore, it is expected that the smaller the company participants work for, the fewer lies they tell, as they work in closer cooperation with their coworkers.

Finally, the binary control variable In charge asked participants who stated they had any work experience if they were in charge of other people, choosing between (1) Yes and (2) No. The variable In charge was included to test whether the intention to give an honest or dishonest answer depends on whether individuals were in charge of coworkers.

Subjects and Procedures

Subjects

A power calculation was performed to determine the number of participants needed to get robust results. The alpha, power, and effect size were needed to calculate the *a priori* required sample size for the ordinal logistic regression using G*Power 3 (Faul et al., 2007). By convention, the alpha was set to 0.05 and the power to 0.8. Since a vignette study regarding deception has not been done before, the effect size from the study by Van de Weijer et al. (2020) will be used as this research has a very similar approach. Van de Weijer et al. (2020) examined reporting cybercrime victimization and the role of the police in this process because cybercrime rates increased rapidly during the last couple of decades. Participants in this study got to see three different vignettes about hypothetical cybercrime victimization where the type of crime, the seriousness of the crime, the victim-perpetrator relationship and the reporting modality were manipulated (Van de Weijer et al., 2020). Subsequently, participants were asked to rate their intention to report the crime to the police (Van de Weijer et al., 2020). Taking the alpha, power and effect size stated resulted in an *a priori* required sample size of 595 participants. However, this paper uses a smaller sample size due to limited means and time limitations.

One hundred nineteen participants completed the questionnaire. These participants were recruited through social media channels like WhatsApp and Facebook. Everyone above the age of 18 was eligible to complete the survey. As all the questions in the questionnaire were mandatory, there were no incomplete responses. Therefore no observations were excluded from the sample.

All the 119 participants who completed the questionnaire ranged between 19 and 90 years old, with an average of 36 years old. Although the average age of the participants was 36 years, most participants (58.8 per cent) fell into the young adulthood category, as can be seen

in Table 2. The majority of participants were female, with 58.0 per cent, one preferred not to say their gender, one was non-binary or third gender, and the rest were male. The participant pool is primarily Dutch, with around 75 per cent. However, a total of 26 different nationalities completed the questionnaire. The majority of participants were higher educated, with more than 60 per cent of participants having completed a Bachelor's or Master's degree at university. In this sample, 95 per cent or 113 participants had worked before, with 60.5 per cent full-time. Around 50 per cent of those 113 participants worked in large companies, around 25 per cent worked in small companies and the remainder of the participants were divided between micro and medium companies. Finally, around 55 per cent of the 113 participants with work experience were in charge of other people.

Procedures

Qualtrics

The online questionnaire that the participants completed was created using the Erasmus University website of Qualtrics. After the questionnaire was designed, an anonymous link was distributed among social media channels like WhatsApp and Facebook. It was allowed for participants to take a break when filling in the questionnaire. The average time to complete the questionnaire was around 10 minutes, when we excluded the four participants that took over 12 hours to complete. However, these participants were not removed from the sample and further data analysis since they still completed the entire questionnaire. The entire questionnaire is included in the Appendix of the paper.

Data screening

Once the questionnaire was closed, the raw data from Qualtrics was transported to Excel and cleaned to allow for further statistical analysis. In Excel, extra variables were created for the BHI's six personality traits: Honesty-Humility, Emotionality, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Openness to Experience. Twelve out of 24 questions of the BHI were reversed keyed, which meant that every (1) Strongly disagree needed to be recoded to (5) Strongly agree, just like every (2) Disagree needed to be recoded to (4) Agree, and vice versa. In addition, the average of the four statements belonging to a specific trait became the final score for that specific personality trait. Furthermore, the variables Age and Nationality were recoded to ordinal and binary variables, respectively. The categories created were for Age (1) Young adulthood, the ages between 18 and 29, (2) Midadulthood, the ages between 30 and 44,

(3) Older adulthood, the ages between 45 and 59, and (4) Senior age 60 and over, and for Nationality (1) Dutch and (2) Other. Finally, the created variables were used for the statistical analysis, which was performed using Stata/MP 17.

Table 2 Demographics

Variable	Category	Frequency	Per centage
Gender	Male	48	40.3%
	Female	69	58.0%
	Non-binary/third gender	1	0.8%
	Prefer not to say	1	0.8%
Nationality	Dutch	89	74.8%
	Non Dutch	30	25.2%
Education	Primary school	0	0.0%
	Secundary school	7	5.9%
	MBO	8	6.7%
	HBO	22	18.5%
	WO Bachelor	29	24.4%
	WO Master	48	40.3%
	PhD or higher	3	2.5%
	Prefer not to say	2	1.7%
	Other	0	0.0%
Work experience	No	6	5.0%
	Yes, part-time max. 8 hours	8	6.7%
	Yes, part-time max. 16 hours	6	5.0%
	Yes, part-time max. 24 hours	13	10.9%
	Yes, part-time max. 32 hours	14	11.8%
	Yes, full-time	72	60.5%
Organisation	Less than 10 employees	12	10.6%
	Less than 50 employees	27	23.9%
	Less than 250 employees	15	13.3%
	More than 250 employees	59	52.2%
In charge	Yes	51	45.1%
	No	62	54.9%

Statistical Analysis

The entire questionnaire should enable us to identify how different personality traits affect lying on the work floor. Therefore, an ologit regression, also known as an ordinal logistic regression analysis, used participants' intention to give a dishonest or honest answer at work as the dependent variable. The ordinal logistic regression model is a model where the dependent variable, as in this case, is an ordinal categorical variable. As participants' intention to give a dishonest or honest answer had a meaningful sequential order from Completely dishonest to Completely honest and had more than two categories, namely five categories, the ordinal logistic regression analysis fitted best. The coefficients an ordinal logistic regression produces are in log-odds. Therefore, they cannot be interpreted as 'normal' OLS coefficients. An ordinal logistic regression can thus only allows for interpreting the sign of the coefficients and interpreting the significance of those coefficients.

This ordinal logistic regression analysis tests how well an individual's intention to give a dishonest or honest answer can be predicted using independent and control variables. The independent variables that were included in the ordinal logistic regression were the ones manipulated across the vignettes; the situation, the individual receiving the answer and modality. Besides these independent variables, participants' characteristics were included in the ordinal logistic regression as control variables. These included Honesty-Humility, Emotionality, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Openness to Experience, Age, Gender, Nationality, Education, Work experience, Organisation and In charge. All the participants answered five different vignettes. Therefore, the observations needed to be clustered within participants. In addition, robust standard errors needed to be calculated to control for the violation of independent observations.

Results

Descriptive statistics

HEXACO

For each personality trait, the four questions belonging to that specific trait combined became the final score. Taking the average over all the participants gives the following scores; 3.81 for Honesty-Humility, 2.85 for Emotionality, 3.90 for Extraversion, 2.98 for Agreeableness, 3.39 for Conscientiousness and 3.62 for Openness to Experience. Honesty-Humility ranged between 2.25 and 5.00. The highest possible score of 5.00 was achieved four times. Emotionality ranged

between 1.00 and 4.25, with the lowest possible score of 1.00 achieved once. Extraversion had a range between 2.00 and 5.00, with a score of 5.00 achieved four times. Agreeableness scored between 1.75 and 4.00. Conscientiousness ranged between 1.25 and 5.00, and the highest possible score of 5.00 was achieved once. Finally, Openness to Experience ranged between 2.25 and 4.75. All the averages, minimum, and maximum scores are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Brief HEXACO Inventory scores

	Average	Minimum	Maximum
Honesty-Humility	3.81	2.25	5.00
Emotionality	2.85	1.00	4.25
Extraversion	3.90	2.00	5.00
Agreeableness	2.98	1.75	4.00
Conscientiousness	3.39	1.25	5.00
Openness to Experience	3.62	2.25	4.75

Vignettes

Taking into account that all 119 participants who completed the questionnaire were shown five different vignettes to answer, a total sample size of 565 judged vignettes was construed. Across all vignettes, participants indicated that they would give a dishonest answer 53 times, a neutral answer 91 times and 451 times an honest answer.

Table 4 shows which argument could be chosen by the participants as the most important reasoning behind lying in a specific situation. In addition, the corresponding responses of the participants are included in Table 4. Generally, the reasons most often indicated were "To cover up a mistake or misdeed" (34.0 per cent), "To uphold social roles or to avoid rudeness" (17.0 per cent), and "To shape a positive image of myself" (15.1 per cent). Contrarily, "To cover up a mistake or misdeed" and "To shape a positive image of myself" were only chosen when the vignette situation was explanations. "To uphold social roles or to avoid rudeness" showed to be the most significant reason to lie for situations about feelings (50.0 per cent) and actions (25.0 per cent). Furthermore, the most chosen reason to give a dishonest answer for the situation about knowledge was "To help people" (100 per cent), as only one participant indicated lying in this situation. Simultaneously, "To gain financial benefits" (28.6 per cent) was the most favoured reason to lie in the situation about facts. The reasons "To make people laugh" and "To hurt other people" were never chosen.

As opposed to Table 4, Table 5 shows the most important reasons why people would not lie. Overall, the reasons most often indicated were "It is immoral" (27.7 per cent), "It is disrespectful and selfish" (16.2 per cent), and "Losing people's trust" (14.2 per cent). "It is immoral" was the most chosen reason to give an honest answer in the situations about feelings (18.5 per cent), knowledge (30.6 per cent), and facts (48.6 per cent). For the situation about actions, "Other" (23.2 per cent) and "It prevents people from knowing the true you" (18.2 per cent) were the significant reasons, and "Losing people's trust" (21.8 per cent) was the leasing reasoning most for situations about explanations.

Table 4 Reason to lie

	Total	Feelings	Knowledge	Actions	Explanations	Facts
To gain financial benefits	2 (3.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (28.6%)
To gain benefits beyond money	2 (3.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (3.0%)	1 (14.3%)
To shape a positive image of myself	8 (15.1%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	8 (24.2%)	0 (0.0%)
To make people laugh	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
To help people	4 (7.5%)	1 (25.0%)	1 (100%)	1 (12.5%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (14.3%)
To uphold social roles or to avoid rudeness	9 (17.0%)	2 (50.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (25.0%)	4 (12.1%)	1 (14.3%)
To hurt other people	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
To cover up a mistake or misdeed	18 (34.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	18 (54.5%)	0 (0.0%)
To escape or evade other people	2 (3.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (25.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0/0%)
To ignore or disregard reality	1 (1.9%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (14.3%)
Unknown	2 (3.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (12.5%)	1 (3.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Other	5 (9.4%)	1 (25.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (25.0%)	1 (3.0%)	1 (14.3%)
Total	53 (100%)	4 (100%)	1 (100%)	8 (100%)	33 (100%)	7 (100%)

Table 5 Reason not to lie

	Total	Feelings	Knowledge	Actions	Explanations	Facts
It is immoral	125 (27.7%)	15 (18.5%)	34 (30.6%)	15 (15.2%)	10 (18.2%)	51 (48.6%)
It is stressful	15 (3.3%)	3 (3.7%)	1 (0.9%)	4 (4.0%)	4 (7.3%)	3 (2.9%)
It stunts your personal growth	24 (5.3%)	14 (17.3%)	3 (2.7%)	3 (3.0%)	1 (1.8%)	3 (2.9%)
I might forget the lie	6 (1.3%)	1 (1.2%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (3.0%)	1 (1.8%)	1 (1.0%)
It is disrespectful and selfish	73 (16.2%)	15 (18.5%)	32 (28.8%)	9 (9.1%)	6 (10.9%)	11 (10.5%)
I have to cope with the lie alone	6 (1.3%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (2.7%)	2 (2.0%)	1 (1.8%)	0 (0.0%)
It is cowardly	27 (6.0%)	8 (9.9%)	5 (4.5%)	4 (4.0%)	9 (16.4%)	1 (1.0%)
It prevents people from knowing the true you	29 (6.4%)	3 (3.7%)	4 (3.6%)	18 (18.2%)	2 (3.6%)	2 (1.9%)
It is embarrassing to get caught	11 (2.4%)	1 (1.2%)	2 (1.8%)	5 (5.1%)	1 (1.8%)	2 (1.9%)
It can damage your reputation	25 (5.5%)	0 (0.0%)	5 (4.5%)	3 (3.0%)	3 (5.5%)	14 (13.3%)
Losing people's trust	64 (14.2%)	10 (12.3%)	19 (17.1%)	10 (10.1%)	12 (21.8%)	13 (12.4%)
It is addictive	1 (0.2%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.9%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Other	45 (10.0%)	11 (13.6%)	2 (1.8%)	23 (23.2%)	5 (9.1%)	4 (3.8%)
Total	451 (100%)	81 (100%)	111 (100%)	99 (100%)	55 (100%)	105 (100%)

Ordinal logistic regression

Table 6 shows the results of the ordinal logistic regression analyses in which respondents' intention to give a dishonest or honest answer was predicted. As previously mentioned, the total sample size of the ologit regression is 595 as all 119 participants answered five vignettes.

The results show that the situation influences respondents' hypothetical reporting rates. The likelihood of an honest answer increased significantly in situations about knowledge,

actions and facts compared to situations about feelings. On the contrary, a surge in the possibility of providing a dishonest response was analysed between situations about explanations compared to situations about feelings. All these results were significant at the one percent significance level.

The individual receiving the response also influences respondents' hypothetical reporting rates. Participants were more likely to give an honest answer when they were communicating with their peer instead of their boss. Simultaneously, participants would tend to give a dishonest answer when communicating with their subordinates than their boss. However, these results were insignificant.

The modality of communication seems to affect respondents' hypothetical reporting rate in that individuals tend to give an honest response when communicating through a phone call or an in-person conversation rather than an email, SMS or WhatsApp message. However, these results were insignificant as well.

The results also show that personality traits influence respondents' hypothetical reporting rates. Honesty-Humility (OR = 2.02, $p < 0.01$), Conscientiousness (OR = 1.37, $p < 0.05$), and Openness to Experience (OR = 1.79, $p < 0.01$) significantly increased the intention to give an honest answer, Emotionality on the other hand significantly increased the intention to give a dishonest answer (OR = 0.72, $p < 0.10$). Furthermore, Extraversion increased the intention to dishonesty, while Agreeableness increased the intention to be honest. However, both were insignificant.

Age also seemed to influence individuals' intention to give a dishonest or honest answer as Midadulthood, Older adulthood and Senior all increased the intention to give an honest answer compared to Young adulthood. Nevertheless, of these results, only Older adulthood was significant (OR = 1.80, $p < 0.10$).

These results further show that females are significantly more likely to give an honest answer compared to males (OR = 1.69, $p < 0.05$). Non-binary individuals and individuals who prefer not to say their gender seemed more likely to give a dishonest answer than males. However, these results were insignificant.

Other nationalities than Dutch increased participants' intentions to give a dishonest answer compared to Dutch participants. This result was insignificant.

No participants indicated that Primary school or Other was their highest education. Therefore, these options are not shown in Table 5. Secondary school is thus the reference category. None of the results from Education are significant. However, MBO, HBO and PhD or higher increased individuals' intention to give a dishonest answer compared to secondary

school, and WO Bachelor, WO Master and Prefer not to say increased individuals' intention to give an honest answer compared to secondary school.

The results show that except for working part-time for a maximum of 8 hours, work experiences increased participants' tendency to give an honest answer compared to never having worked. On the other hand, working part-time for a maximum of 8 hours increased respondents' intention to give a dishonest response compared to never having worked. Of these results, only working full-time was significant (OR = 3.67, $p < 0.05$).

No significant effect was found between the size of the organisation and individuals' intention to give a dishonest or honest answer. Nevertheless, individuals who worked for small and medium companies were more likely to report a dishonest answer than individuals who worked for micro companies. In contacts, individuals who worked for large companies were more likely to give an honest answer than individuals who worked for micro companies.

Finally, not being in charge of other people increased participants' intention to give a dishonest answer compared to being in charge of others. Again, however, no significant association was found.

Discussion

This paper uses a sample of 119 participants to examine how personality traits affect deception on the work floor. Previous research has already investigated how personality traits affect lying in everyday life (Kashy & DePaulo, 1996; McLeod & Genereux, 2008; Sarzyńska et al., 2017) or how individuals use deception during a job interview (Schneider et al., 2015; Weiss & Feldman, 2006). However, as people lie most frequently between the ages of 18 and 29 (Debey et al., 2015) and as people between those ages tend to spend most of their time in the office, deception could pose problems on the work floor. Especially since the discovery of deception is accompanied by intense negative emotions, which damage trust and can harm relationships (McCornack & Levine, 1990). Therefore, to determine how personality traits affected deception on the work floor, participants completed a questionnaire which consisted of a personality test, a vignette study on lying and some demographic questions.

Results from the vignette study show that the situation predicts reporting behaviour, as all the results were significant. This study shows that when the situation is about knowledge, actions, or fact, individuals are less likely to deceive than when the situation is about feelings. These results are in line with the results found by DePaulo et al. (1996), where individuals lie primarily about feelings. However, this study also finds that when the situation is about

Table 6 Ordinal logistic regression on intention to give a dishonest or honest answer

	B	Robust S.E.	Odds ratio
Situation:			
Feelings	(ref.)		
Knowledge	2.10***	0.24	8.13
Actions	1.02***	0.24	2.80
Explanations	-0.92***	0.28	0.40
Facts	1.69***	0.24	5.44
Individuals receiving the answer:			
Boss	(ref.)		
Peer	0.09	0.21	1.10
Subordinate	-0.22	0.20	0.80
Modality:			
Email, SMS or WhatsApp	(ref.)		
Phone call	0.25	0.20	1.28
In-person conversation	0.21	0.21	1.24
Personality traits:			
Honesty-Humility	0.70***	0.17	2.02
Emotionality	-0.33*	0.18	0.72
Extraversion	-0.01	0.19	0.98
Agreeableness	0.02	0.19	1.02
Conscientiousness	0.31**	0.16	1.37
Openness to Experience	0.58***	0.17	1.79
Age:			
Young adulthood	(ref.)		
Midadulthood	0.33	0.32	1.39
Older adulthood	0.59*	0.31	1.80
Senior	0.24	0.37	1.27
Gender:			
Male	(ref.)		
Female	0.53**	0.25	1.69
Non-binary/third gender	-2.87	1.87	0.06
Prefer not to say	-0.64	1.27	0.52
Nationality	-0.25	0.24	0.78
Education:			
Secondary school	(ref.)		
MBO	-0.38	0.51	0.68
HBO	-0.17	0.43	0.85
WO Bachelor	0.53	0.43	1.70
WO Master	0.02	0.39	1.02
PhD or higher	-0.96	0.77	0.38
Prefer not to say	0.32	1.18	1.37
Work experience:			
No	(ref.)		
Yes, part-time max. 8 hours	-0.19	0.59	0.82
Yes, part-time max. 16 hours	0.34	0.55	1.40
Yes, part-time max. 24 hours	0.86	0.55	2.37
Yes, part-time max. 32 hours	0.42	0.56	1.52
Yes, full-time	1.30**	0.51	3.67
Organisation:			
Micro	(ref.)		
Small	-0.17	0.27	0.84
Medium	-0.09	0.30	0.92
Large	0.09	0.24	1.09
In charge	-0.23	0.15	0.79
N vignettes	595		
N respondent	119		
Pseudo R^2			0.1846

* Indicates $p < 0.1$, ** indicates $p < 0.05$, *** indicates $p < 0.01$

explanations, individuals are more likely to deceive compared to situations about feelings. This contradicts the findings of DePaulo et al. (1996). A possible explanation could be that at work, people have to justify their behaviour and action more often, resulting in more lies.

The vignette study also found several other determinants of reporting behaviour, although all insignificant. DePaulo and Kashy (1998) found that individuals told fewer lies to those with whom they felt a closer relationship. This study shows that individuals are more likely to respond honestly to their peers than to their boss. This result makes sense as it is expected that individuals have a closer relationship with their peers than their boss. Furthermore, DePaulo et al. (1996) found that individuals try to avoid closer communication modalities, such as in-person conversation, when telling lies. In line with this, the results of the study show that people are more likely to be honest when communicating through a phone call or an in-person conversation than an email, SMS or WhatsApp.

Results from the personality test and the vignette study show that personality traits also predict reporting dishonest or honest answers, although not all comparisons were significant. The first hypothesis tested was *"People who score high on Honesty-Humility deceive less than those who score low."* The observed correlation between Honesty-Humility and the intention to give a dishonest or honest answer was in the predicted direction and was significant. This result supports the hypothesis that Honesty-Humility is negatively correlated with the number of lies told. The second hypothesis tested was *"People who score high on Emotionality deceive more than those who score low."* Similar to the first hypothesis, the observed correlation between Emotionality and reporting behaviour was significant and in the predicted direction. In addition, this result supports the hypothesis that Emotionality has a positive correlation with the number of lies reported. The third hypothesis tested was *"People who score high on Extraversion deceive more than those who score low."* The observed correlation between Extraversion and the reporting behaviour was in the predicted direction. However, it was insignificant. The fourth hypothesis tested was *"People who score high on Agreeableness deceive less than those who score low."* Similar to the third hypothesis, the observed correlation between Agreeableness and participants' intention to give a dishonest or honest answer was in the predicted direction. However, insignificant. This is remarkable, as previous studies on personality and deception found significant positive correlations between Extraversion and deception (Sarzyńska et al., 2017; Weiss & Feldman, 2006) and significant negative correlations between Agreeableness and deception (Sarzyńska et al., 2017). A possible explanation for this could be that the small sample size of this study prevents the result from becoming significant. The abovementioned results partially support the third and fourth hypotheses. The fifth hypothesis tested was *"People*

who score high on Conscientiousness deceive less than those who score low." The observed correlation between Conscientiousness and reporting behaviour was significant and in the predicted direction. Therefore, this result supports the hypothesis that Conscientiousness and the number of lies told have a negative correlation. The sixth and final hypothesis tested was *"People who score high on Openness to Experience deceive more than those who score low."* Openness to Experience is the only personality trait where the observed correlation with the reporting behaviour is not in the predicted direction and significant. This result is not in line with Sarzyńska et al. (2017), who found that Openness to Experience positively correlated with the number of lies told. In addition, this result does not support the sixth hypothesis. It is perceivable that in a work environment, people high in Openness to Experience share some similarities with people high in Agreeableness. As people who are curious about many things often also want to learn new things. This type of person needs to cooperate more with others. Therefore, deceiving less instead of more.

Finally, few significant results were found between reporting a dishonest or honest answer and demographics. However, a result worth mentioning outside the scope of the hypotheses is the observed effect of age. As expected, all the older age categories were less likely to deceive compared to young adulthood. However, only older adulthood had a significant effect. A possible explanation for this could be that the small sample size of this study prevents the result from becoming significant.

Limitations

The first limitation of this study was the use of the BHI. Now, although the BHI, like other short personality scales, were beneficial when participants needed to fill out lengthy questionnaires, the alpha reliability and utility were generally compromised when using such short personality scales (De Vries, 2013). Unfortunately, this is also the case in this study as Cronbach's alpha is 0.22; resulting in an unacceptable internal consistency. Using a more extended personality test, like the HEXACO-PI-R, which consists of 200 questions, would resolve this low alpha.

Another limitation of this study was the self-constructed situations used in the vignettes. The situations in the vignettes were based on the content taxonomy by DePaulo et al. (1996). However, as there is no research on what particular lies are often told in the office, the specific situations were self-constructed. Therefore, it is possible that the tested lies are not common lies told at the office and that a different selection of situations would have led to different

results. In addition, future research could investigate which lies individuals actually tell in the office.

Furthermore, people often do not plan to lie, as most lies people tell are little lies (DePaulo et al., 1996). This can result in the Intention-Behaviour Gap, where people who do not have the intention to lie still end up doing it (Sheeran & Webb, 2016).

Finally, the number of observations is a limitation. According to the power calculation performed in G*Power 3, the study required a sample size of 595 participants. However, this study used a smaller sample size of 119 participants. The smaller sample size was due to limited means and time limitations. Nevertheless, it is plausible that more results would turn out significant when the required sample size of 595 participants was used instead of 119.

Suggestions for future research

For future research, it might be interesting to perform the same research again with a full-length personality test and the required sample size of 595 participants to correct for the insignificant results and the low alpha in this research.

In addition, it is also interesting to test how specific personality traits affect the types of lies often told in the office.

Finally, it might be beneficial to perform a full-length personality test followed by a diary study on lying at work. For example, Kashy and DePaulo (1996) conducted a pair of dairy studies on lying in everyday life, where participants would keep records of all their social interactions and communications for seven days. If a similar study were to be performed on the work floor, this would give us insight into the kind of lies told in the office. This study used self-constructed situations, which possibly were not common lies told at the office. Therefore, a dairy study could be used to determine what lies people often tell at work and how often they actually tell them.

Conclusion

Lying is a daily activity in which everybody participates (DePaulo et al., 1996), especially individuals between the ages of 18 and 29 (Debey et al., 2015). Although most lies people tell are minor lies, their discovery still tends to be an intense and negative experience that erodes trust and harms relationships (McCornack & Levine, 1990). Moreover, the peak in lying coincides with the period when individuals start working, making it reasonable to assume that some lies might be told in the office.

Several factors influence people's intentions to lie, such as individuals' self-presentation goals (Feldman et al., 2002; Weiss and Feldman, 2006), intelligence (Sarzyńska et al., 2017) and personality (Sarzyńska et al., 2017; Weiss & Feldman, 2006). This study focused primarily on personality. To answer the research question of this paper, *"How do personality traits affect deception on the work floor?"* an online questionnaire was conducted with 119 participants. The participants completed a personality test, a vignette study, and some demographic questions. An ordinal logistic regression analysis then used participants' intention to give a dishonest or honest answer as the dependent variable. The results showed that Honesty-Humility, Conscientiousness, and Openness to Experience were significantly negatively correlated with the number of lies told. In addition, Emotionality was significantly positively correlated with the number of lies told. Furthermore, Extraversion was positively correlated with the number of lies told and Agreeableness negatively. However, both were insignificant. A possible explanation for this could be that the small sample size of this study prevents the result from becoming significant. The results from this study thus show support for the first, second and fifth hypotheses, partial support for the third and fourth hypotheses and no support for the sixth hypothesis.

There are still improvements for this study. A larger sample size could help to get more significant results. Also, a full-length personality test could have helped to improve the internal consistency of the personality variables.

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Appendix

Survey Flow

Block: Introduction (1 Question)

Branch: New Branch
    If
        If Dear participant, welcome! Thank you for taking the time to participate. Participating takes abou... No, I don't consent, and I will not participate in the research study Is Selected

    EndSurvey:

Block: HEXACO (25 Questions)
Block: Vignette study (1 Question)

Block Randomizer: 1 - Evenly Present Elements
Vignette 1 - Feelings

    Block: V1.1 (3 Questions)
    Block: V1.2 (3 Questions)
    Block: V1.3 (3 Questions)
    Block: V1.4 (3 Questions)
    Block: V1.5 (3 Questions)
    Block: V1.6 (3 Questions)
    Block: V1.7 (3 Questions)
    Block: V1.8 (3 Questions)
    Block: V1.9 (3 Questions)

Block Randomizer: 1 - Evenly Present Elements
Vignette 2 - Achievements, knowledge

    Block: V2.1 (3 Questions)
    Block: V2.2 (3 Questions)
    Block: V2.3 (3 Questions)
    Block: V2.4 (3 Questions)
    Block: V2.5 (3 Questions)
    Block: V2.6 (3 Questions)
    Block: V2.7 (3 Questions)
    Block: V2.8 (3 Questions)
    Block: V2.9 (3 Questions)

Block Randomizer: 1 - Evenly Present Elements
Vignette 3 - Actions, plans, whereabouts

    Block: V3.1 (3 Questions)

Block: V3.2 (3 Questions)
Block: V3.3 (3 Questions)
Block: V3.4 (3 Questions)
Block: V3.5 (3 Questions)
Block: V3.6 (3 Questions)
Block: V3.7 (3 Questions)
Block: V3.8 (3 Questions)
Block: V3.9 (3 Questions)

Block Randomizer: 1 - Evenly Present Elements
Vignette 4 - Explanations, reasons

Block: V4.1 (3 Questions)
Block: V4.2 (3 Questions)
Block: V4.3 (3 Questions)
Block: V4.4 (3 Questions)
Block: V4.5 (3 Questions)
Block: V4.6 (3 Questions)
Block: V4.7 (3 Questions)
Block: V4.8 (3 Questions)
Block: V4.9 (3 Questions)

Block Randomizer: 1 - Evenly Present Elements
Vignette 5 - Facts, possessions

Block: V5.1 (3 Questions)
Block: V5.2 (3 Questions)
Block: V5.3 (3 Questions)
Block: V5.4 (3 Questions)
Block: V5.5 (3 Questions)
Block: V5.6 (3 Questions)
Block: V5.7 (3 Questions)
Block: V5.8 (3 Questions)
Block: V5.9 (3 Questions)

Block: Basic demographics (7 Questions)

Introduction (1 Question)

Dear participant, welcome!

Thank you for taking the time to participate. Participating takes about 10 minutes.

This survey is part of my master thesis in Behavioural Economics, in which I investigate how people's personality affects their responses in an office setting. The survey contains a short personality questionnaire and several hypothetical scenarios. You can also participate in this study when you're not currently working or when you have never worked before.

Your response will be kept entirely anonymous. Therefore, I kindly ask that you answer truthfully and to the best of your abilities. This survey is voluntary, and you can withdraw at any time. Please indicate below if you consent to participate in this study.

If you have any questions about the survey or my research, you can contact me at 455326lv@student.eur.nl

- Yes, I am 18 years or older and consent to participating in the research study
- No, I don't consent, and I will not participate in the research study

HEXACO (25 Questions)

For this first part of the survey, please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements, using the following answering categories: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral (neither agree, nor disagree), 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree.

Page Break

Q1 **I can look at a painting for a long time**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break

Q2 **I make sure that things are in the right spot**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break ────────────────────────────────────

Q3 **I remain unfriendly to someone who was mean to me**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break ────────────────────────────────────

Q4 **Nobody likes talking with me**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break ────────────────────────────────────

Q5 **I am afraid of feeling pain**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break ────────────────────────────────────

Q6 **I find it difficult to lie**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break ───

Q7 **I think science is boring**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break ───

Q8 **I postpone complicated tasks as long as possible**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break ───

Q9 **I often express criticism**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break ───

Q10 **I easily approach strangers**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break ─────────────────────────────

Q11 **I worry less than others**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break ─────────────────────────────

Q12 **I would like to know how to make lots of money in a dishonest manner**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break ─────────────────────────────

Q13 **I have a lot of imagination**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break ─────────────────────────────

Q14 **I work very precisely**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break ─────────────────────────────────

Q15 **I tend to quickly agree with others**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break ─────────────────────────────────

Q16 **I like to talk with others**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break ─────────────────────────────────

Q17 **I can easily overcome difficulties on my own**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break ─────────────────────────────────

Q18 **I want to be famous**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break ───────────────────────────────────

Q19 **I like people with strange ideas**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break ───────────────────────────────────

Q20 **I often do things without really thinking**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break ───────────────────────────────────

Q21 **Even when I'm treated badly, I remain calm**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break ───────────────────────────────────

Q22 **I am seldom cheerful**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break ───────────────────────────────

Q23 **I have to cry during sad or romantic movies**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break ───────────────────────────────

Q24 **I am entitled to special treatment**

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (neither agree, nor disagree) (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Page Break ───────────────────────────────

Vignette study (1 Question)

Now there will follow some scenarios. Please try to imagine that you are working, and this has happened to you. I would like to know how you would respond. There are no right or wrong answers. I would like to know you opinion.

Vignette 1 – Feelings

You have *email, SMS or WhatsApp contact / a phone call / a in-person conversation* with your *subordinate / peer / boss*.

Earlier that morning, there was a meeting with your whole team where your *subordinate / peer / boss* had to present. You didn't think it went very well.

Now your *subordinate / peer / boss* asks you how you thought it went.

Vignette 1 **How would you respond?**

- Completely dishonest (1)
- Dishonest (2)
- Neutral (neither dishonest, nor honest) (3)
- Honest (4)
- Completely honest (5)

Page Break

Dishonest 1 **What is the main reason for giving a dishonest response?**

- To gain financial benefits (1)
- To gain benefits beyond money (2)
- To shape a positive image of myself (3)
- To make people laugh (4)
- To help people (5)
- To uphold social roles or to avoid rudeness (6)
- To hurt other people (7)
- To cover up a mistake or misdeed (8)
- To escape or evade other people (9)
- To ignore or disregard reality (10)
- Unknown (11)
- Other, please specify … (12) _____

Page Break

Honest 1 **What is the main reason for not giving a dishonest response?**

- It is immoral (1)

- It is stressful (2)

- It stunts personal growth (3)

- I might forget the lie (4)

- It is disrespectful and selfish (5)

- I have to cope with the lie alone (6)

- It is cowardly (7)

- It prevents people from knowing the true you (8)

- It is embarrassing to get caught (9)

- It can damage your reputation (10)

- It is addictive (11)

- Other, please specify … (12) _____

Page Break ——————————————————————————————————

Vignette 2 – Achievements, knowledge

> You have *email, SMS or WhatsApp contact / a phone call / a in-person conversation* with your *subordinate / peer / boss*.
>
> A colleague has given you a convenient Excel file that you can also use in your team.
>
> Your *subordinate / peer / boss* is very enthusiastic about it and asks if you made it yourself.

Vignette 2 **How would you respond?**

- Completely dishonest (1)

- Dishonest (2)

- Neutral (neither dishonest, nor honest) (3)

- Honest (4)

- Completely honest (5)

Page Break ——————————————————————————————————

45

Dishonest 2 **What is the main reason for giving a dishonest response?**

- To gain financial benefits (1)

- To gain benefits beyond money (2)

- To shape a positive image of myself (3)

- To make people laugh (4)

- To help people (5)

- To uphold social roles or to avoid rudeness (6)

- To hurt other people (7)

- To cover up a mistake or misdeed (8)

- To escape or evade other people (9)

- To ignore or disregard reality (10)

- Unknown (11)

- Other, please specify … (12) _____

Page Break ———————————————————————————————————————

Honest 2 **What is the main reason for not giving a dishonest response?**

- It is immoral (1)

- It is stressful (2)

- It stunts personal growth (3)

- I might forget the lie (4)

- It is disrespectful and selfish (5)

- I have to cope with the lie alone (6)

- It is cowardly (7)

- It prevents people from knowing the true you (8)

- It is embarrassing to get caught (9)

- It can damage your reputation (10)

- It is addictive (11)

- Other, please specify … (12) _____

Page Break ——————————————————————————————————————

Vignette 3 – Actions, plans, whereabouts

You have *email, SMS or WhatsApp contact / a phone call / a in-person conversation* with your *subordinate / peer / boss*.

Your *subordinate / peer / boss* asks you if you have anything nice planned for the weekend. However, at this point, you have nothing planned.

Vignette 3 **How would you respond?**

- Completely dishonest (1)

- Dishonest (2)

- Neutral (neither dishonest, nor honest) (3)

- Honest (4)

- Completely honest (5)

Page Break ——————————————————————————————————————

Dishonest 3 **What is the main reason for giving a dishonest response?**

- To gain financial benefits (1)
- To gain benefits beyond money (2)
- To shape a positive image of myself (3)
- To make people laugh (4)
- To help people (5)
- To uphold social roles or to avoid rudeness (6)
- To hurt other people (7)
- To cover up a mistake or misdeed (8)
- To escape or evade other people (9)
- To ignore or disregard reality (10)
- Unknown (11)
- Other, please specify … (12) _____

Page Break ————————————————————————————————

Honest 3 **What is the main reason for not giving a dishonest response?**

- It is immoral (1)
- It is stressful (2)
- It stunts personal growth (3)
- I might forget the lie (4)
- It is disrespectful and selfish (5)
- I have to cope with the lie alone (6)
- It is cowardly (7)
- It prevents people from knowing the true you (8)
- It is embarrassing to get caught (9)
- It can damage your reputation (10)
- It is addictive (11)
- Other, please specify … (12) _____

Page Break ——————————————————————————————

Vignette 4 – Explanations, reasons

You have *email, SMS or WhatsApp contact / a phone call / a in-person conversation* with your *subordinate / peer / boss*.

At the end of the day, you have an important meeting. Unfortunately, you have not yet prepared for this meeting because you forgot about it and now you don't have enough time to prepare for it. Therefore, you decide to move the meeting to a later moment in time.

Your *subordinate / peer / boss* asks you the reason why this meeting has to be moved.

Vignette 4 **How would you respond?**

- Completely dishonest (1)
- Dishonest (2)
- Neutral (neither dishonest, nor honest) (3)
- Honest (4)
- Completely honest (5)

Page Break ——————————————————————————————

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Dishonest 4 **What is the main reason for giving a dishonest response?**

- To gain financial benefits (1)
- To gain benefits beyond money (2)
- To shape a positive image of myself (3)
- To make people laugh (4)
- To help people (5)
- To uphold social roles or to avoid rudeness (6)
- To hurt other people (7)
- To cover up a mistake or misdeed (8)
- To escape or evade other people (9)
- To ignore or disregard reality (10)
- Unknown (11)
- Other, please specify … (12) _____

Page Break ⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯

Honest 4 **What is the main reason for not giving a dishonest response?**

- It is immoral (1)

- It is stressful (2)

- It stunts personal growth (3)

- I might forget the lie (4)

- It is disrespectful and selfish (5)

- I have to cope with the lie alone (6)

- It is cowardly (7)

- It prevents people from knowing the true you (8)

- It is embarrassing to get caught (9)

- It can damage your reputation (10)

- It is addictive (11)

- Other, please specify … (12) _____

Page Break ——————————————————————————————————

Vignette 5 – Facts, possessions

You have *email, SMS or WhatsApp contact / a phone call / a in-person conversation* with your *subordinate / peer / boss*.

Your *subordinate / peer / boss* asks you how much overtime you have worked in the past month. Because your *subordinate / peer / boss* has to enter this into the system. You will receive your overtime paid in full.

Vignette 5 **How would you respond?**

- Completely dishonest (1)

- Dishonest (2)

- Neutral (neither dishonest, nor honest) (3)

- Honest (4)

- Completely honest (5)

Page Break ——————————————————————————————————

Dishonest 5 **What is the main reason for giving a dishonest response?**

- To gain financial benefits (1)
- To gain benefits beyond money (2)
- To shape a positive image of myself (3)
- To make people laugh (4)
- To help people (5)
- To uphold social roles or to avoid rudeness (6)
- To hurt other people (7)
- To cover up a mistake or misdeed (8)
- To escape or evade other people (9)
- To ignore or disregard reality (10)
- Unknown (11)
- Other, please specify … (12) _____

Page Break ——————————————————————————————————————

Honest 5 **What is the main reason for not giving a dishonest response?**

- It is immoral (1)

- It is stressful (2)

- It stunts personal growth (3)

- I might forget the lie (4)

- It is disrespectful and selfish (5)

- I have to cope with the lie alone (6)

- It is cowardly (7)

- It prevents people from knowing the true you (8)

- It is embarrassing to get caught (9)

- It can damage your reputation (10)

- It is addictive (11)

- Other, please specify … (12) _____

Page Break ———————————————————————————————————————

Demographics (7 Questions)

Age **Please indicate your age in years**

_____

Page Break ———————————————————————————————————————

Gender **Please indicate your gender**

- Male (1)

- Female (2)

- Non-binary / third gender (3)

- Prefer not to say (4)

Page Break ———————————————————————————————————————

Nationality **Please indicate your nationality**

▼ Afghan ... Zimbabwean

Page Break ─────────────────────────────────

Education **Please indicate the highest level of education you have completed**

- Primary school (1)

- Secundary school (2)

- MBO (3)

- HBO (4)

- WO Bachelor (5)

- WO Master (6)

- PhD or higher (7)

- Prefer not to say (8)

- Other, please specify (9) _____

Page Break ─────────────────────────────────

Work experience **Please indicate if you have any work experience**

- No

- Yes, part-time max. 8 hours per week

- Yes, part-time max. 16 hours per week

- Yes, part-time max. 24 hours per week

- Yes, part-time max. 32 hours per week

- Yes, full-time

Page Break ─────────────────────────────────

Organisation **Please indicate how large the organisation is/was**

- Less than 10 employees

- Less than 50 employees

- Less than 250 employees

- More than 250 employees

Page Break ─────────────────────────────

In charge **Please indicate if you are/were in charge of other people**

- Yes
- No

Thank you for participating in this study. I will use the information you provided anonymously for research purposes. The results of this study will be published on a group level and will not be traceable to you.

If you have any questions about the survey or my research, you can contact me at 455326lv@student.eur.nl