

Online Personality Assessment: Equivalence of traditional and WWW personality measures.

*Tom Buchanan*¹

WWW-mediated personality tests are amongst the techniques increasingly being used in online psychological research. Given their relatively short history, it remains important to establish the validity of online research techniques (e.g. Krantz, Ballard & Scher, 1997, Krantz & Dalal, in press). For WWW personality tests, an obvious question is whether such instruments are psychometrically and psychologically equivalent to traditional pencil-and-paper measures of the same constructs (Buchanan & Smith, 1999). This paper reviews evidence from research published to date (e.g. Pasveer & Ellard, 1998; Davis, 1998; Schwarzer, Mueller & Greenglass, 1999; Buchanan & Smith, 1999; Buchanan & Smith, in press) which has demonstrated that online instruments can be psychometrically equivalent to pencil-and-paper versions of the same measures. However, this is not always the case. As an example, a current project evaluating an online version of a Five-Factor personality inventory (Goldberg, 1999) is described and preliminary conclusions about its validity presented. Finally, implications and future possibilities for online personality research are discussed.

¹ Department of Psychology, University of Westminster, 309 Regent Street, London W1R 8AL, UK. Email tb99@iname.com