

Traits, Consistency, and Self-Schemata: What Do Our Methods Measure?

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Psychologists have responded to the inadequacies that Mischel (1968) noted in the trait approach to personality by exploring two other facets of personality, cross-situational consistency and self-schemata. These newer approaches have yet to be clearly distinguished conceptually or empirically from the traditional model that they were designed to supplement or replace. Our research tries to do this. In it, two samples of respondents ($N = 362$) rated the extent to which, of 10 traits applied to them (overall level), rated their consistency on these traits (cross-situational consistency), and rated the importance of these traits to their view of themselves (self-schema). Correlational analyses show that the measures of consistency and self-schema lack discriminant validity from the measures of overall level. Specifically, their correlations with level were as high as their internal consistencies. We argue that the measurement models for cross-situational consistency and for self-schemata do not adequately reflect their theoretical counterparts. This failure undercuts the interpretations of recent research by Markus (1977), Markus, Crane, Bernstein, and Siladi (1982), and S. Bem (1981).

To a great extent the results of psychologists' attempt to understand personality has been a list of personality traits and research on their causes, correlates, and consequences. But Mischel (1968) and others (Peterson, 1968; Vernon, 1964) severely questioned the value of this enterprise. One of the responses to Mischel's criticism of the trait approach to personality has been the introduction of two alternative ways of thinking about personality—the cross-situational consistency approach and the self-schema approach. Our intention in this article is to examine the conceptual distinctions among the facets of personality posited by these three approaches and the methods for measuring them. We

especially concentrate on the self-schema approach.

Overall Level

The traditional trait approach has generally regarded a trait (the extent to which an individual is high, moderate, or low on a personality dimension) as a latent tendency to act consistently with one's level on that dimension (Magnusson & Endler, 1977). We refer to this measurement as overall level. As Magnusson and Endler note, many of the arguments about the usefulness of this way of conceptualizing personality come from empirical refutations of the trait measurement model and not from theoretical disagreements.

The trait measurement model makes two assumptions that lead to predictions unsubstantiated by empirical research. The model assumes that each individual possesses a true score on each personality trait and that an accurate measurement of this score will be monotonically related to each behavioral measure of that trait. These assumptions imply that stable rank orders of individuals exist across situations in the expression of trait-related behavior.

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A person's overall level on a trait is generally measured through the use of self-reports. Single item questions that ask directly for the person's extremity on the trait and personality inventories, (i.e., multiple item tests that produce a composite score on a trait, e.g., California Personality Inventory, [CPI] Gough, 1969), are typically used. Theoretical and empirical justification for the use of single item global measures of traits (Kenrick & Braver, 1982; Peterson, 1965) continues alongside research demonstrating the efficacy of composite scales in behavioral assessment (Epstein, 1979; Moskowitz, 1982; Rushton, Jackson, & Paunonen, 1981).

Cross-Situational Consistency

Cross-situational consistency theorists have responded to the apparent unpredictability of behavior demonstrated by the traditional trait measurement model by specifying the conditions under which traits predict behavior. They assert that behavioral consistency is a function of both the meaning of the trait and the meaningfulness of that trait to the individual. This approach maintains that stable cross-situational consistency in behavior is characteristic of people for some, but not all, traits. Thus, the accurate prediction of behavior depends on knowledge of the traits on which an individual is consistent and knowledge of the behaviors he or she sees as relevant to those traits. As a result, according to these theorists, traditional trait research that measures only a person's level on a trait, has underreported the predictability of behavior.

Consistency researchers have attempted to demonstrate that measuring self-reported consistency improves the prediction of behavior. For example, D. Bem and Allen (1974) have shown that, at least for the trait of friendliness, people can report how consistent they are across situations. They argue that one can predict friendly behaviors from measures of overall level better for consistent people than for inconsistent ones (cf. Mischel & Peake, 1982).

Self-Schema

A theory of self-schema is another response to Mischel's critique of the traditional trait

model. Schema theorists think about traits in terms of cognitive generalizations about the self. Like consistency theorists, they dismiss the assumption of a one-to-one correspondence between a person's level on a trait and his or her trait relevant behavior. People's self-schemata are not dependent on their overall level on a trait but rather on the personal significance or salience of the trait dimension to them. That is to say, their cognitive organizations determine which dimensions are salient and important to them.

According to this view, people with different schemata interpret and respond to the same stimuli in different ways.

Systematic effects in social behavior depend less on people having some amount of a particular substantive attribute, such as independence or dependence, and more on the readiness or ability to categorize behavior along certain dimensions. (Markus, 1977, p. 77)

The Measurement Problem

We have sketched the conceptual relations between the traditional level model of traits and two alternative models, a cross-situational consistency model and a self-schema model. They both hold promise of remedying the inability of the traditional trait model to strongly predict behavior. Before they are accepted, however, their empirical relations to the traditional measurement model of traits must be examined. If they show only a small relation to overall level, then a combination of the new models with the traditional model might predict behavior better than either alone. On the other hand, despite their conceptual independence, the new measures of traits may be highly related to the traditional level measure. In this case little is gained by hiding the use of traditional methods under new labels.

Previous research leaves the relation among the three models of personality in doubt. The standard method of measuring cross-situational consistency in personality precludes assessing its natural relation with overall level. For example, D. Bem and Allen (1974) and Zanna, Olson, & Fazio (1980) statistically controlled level when measuring consistency. Stones and Burt (1978) and Rushton et al. (1981), however, have found that the more extremely people rate their level on a personal

trait, the more they also rate themselves as consistent on that trait. For example, people who rate themselves as moderate on a trait also rate themselves as highly variable across situations. Other measures of cross-situational consistency (Kenrick & Stringfield, 1980) have been criticized for ignoring trait extremity entirely (Rushton et al., 1981).

Self-schema theorists have confounded measures of schema and measures of level and, therefore, have obscured the relation between peoples' schemata about a trait and their level on that trait. Thus for researchers such as Markus (Markus, 1977; Markus et al., 1982) and S. Bem (1981; 1982), a person who is schematic on a trait is one who has an extreme level on that dimension and who considers the dimension important. The relation between level and importance is unclear.

Finally, the relation between consistency and self-schema is also of interest. For example, although Markus (1977) posits a positive relation between the two, no data yet exist to support this claim.

Overview

The empirical goal of the present article is to test the discriminant validity of methods to measure peoples' overall level on a trait, their cross-situational consistency on that trait, and their self-schema on that trait. We used several self-report measures of trait level, cross-situational consistency, and self-schema that were obtained from previous research or designed for the present studies. Participants described themselves on these measures for each of several traits. The correlations between all measures were computed to assess the naturally occurring relations among level, consistency, and schema and to evaluate the convergent and discriminant validity of these facets of personality.

Study 1

Method

Participants and Procedures

One hundred and ninety male and female college undergraduates at Cornell University were paid \$.50 to complete a brief questionnaire.

Measures

The questions were self-report items designed to assess participants' trait level, trait consistency, and self-schema for the three traits of *friendliness*, *intelligence*, and *articulativeness*. We used friendliness and intelligence as target traits because of their repeated assessment in the personality literature and because of their independence. We used articulateness because it is a more specific trait with clear behavioral manifestations. Questions about other traits were added as filler items so that the target traits would not be recognized as the focus of inquiry. The specific questions used are shown in Table 1. The reliabilities and validities of several of these measures are unknown. They were chosen because they are the measures commonly used by researchers in the field or are directly derivative of the proposed theories.

Level. The four measures were traditional self-report Likert scales, on which participants reported the extent to which a trait described them, either in general, compared to their peers, or in particular social circumstances. (e.g., In general, how [friendly] are you?)

Self-schema. Schema theorists like Markus (1977) and S. Bem (1981) define self-schema as the importance of and readiness to use a trait dimension in thinking about one's self and the world. However, they measure it by combining measures of importance with measures of level. To determine the relation of the importance of a dimension for a person to that person's level on the dimension, we isolated these components. We measured self-schema by asking questions about the importance people assigned to a trait (e.g., How important is friendliness . . . to the image you have of yourself, regardless of whether or not the trait describes you? [from Markus, 1977]). We also asked about their readiness to use the trait in thinking about themselves and others, (e.g., When attending a lecture, how frequently do you judge how friendly the speaker is?)

Cross-situational consistency. The questions here were modeled after those used by D. Bem and Allen (1974). They included both participants' self-reports on consistency (e.g., How much do you vary from one situation to another in how friendly you are?) and the standard deviation of their self-reported level in different social circumstances (e.g., friendliness with parents, friends, or siblings).

Results

The central datum of this article is a comparison of the internal consistency of the various level, schema, and consistency measures with their discriminant validity. We computed Pearson correlations between all measures of level, schema, and consistency separately for the traits of intelligence, friendliness, and articulateness. The signs and magnitudes of the correlations were highly similar across the three traits. We have presented the comparison twice, once averaging over measures and once averaging over traits.

Table 2 shows the z-transformed correlations for the three traits of friendliness, intelligence, and articulateness, averaged over measures. Table 1 presents the mean z-transformed correlations for the different measures of level, consistency, and schema averaged over traits.

As Tables 1 and 2 show, the internal consistency of the traditional trait level measures (mean interitem correlations = .34) was at least as high as that of the schema measures (mean interitem correlations = .20) or the cross-situational consistency measures (mean interitem correlations = .23).¹

Tables 1 and 2 also show the cross-correlations between the various models of personality. The discriminant validity of both the schema and the cross-situational consistency models of personality was weak. Specifically, the mean correlation between measures of schema and measures of level (mean $r = .23$) was as high as the internal consistency of the schema measures (mean $r = .20$). This means that items designed to measure schema correlate as highly with items designed to measure level as they do with each other. The two consistency measures show no linear relation to either the level measures (mean $r = .14$) or to the schema measures (mean $r = .04$).

Unlike Stones and Burt's (1978) data, we found no curvilinear relation between consistency and trait level. We computed polarization scores for each participant on each trait, by taking the absolute value of the difference between each participant's score on a measure and the group mean on that measure. The correlations of the consistency measures with the polarization scores are low (mean $r = .06$).

The argument against the internal consistency and discriminant validity of the self-schema and the cross-situational consistency measures is based on the patterns of correlations we have presented and not on their absolute magnitudes. Given the way that we aggregated correlations over measures and traits and the nonindependence of the correlations, we could not directly test the significance of the difference between mean correlations. Therefore, to examine these patterns more explicitly, we factor analyzed the inter-

item correlation matrices of the three traits to test the independence of the three facets of personality. We performed a principal axis factor analysis with oblique rotation separately for each trait. The hypothesis of independence would predict a three factor solution with measures of level, self-schema, and consistency loading primarily on three distinct factors. Instead, at least four factors were obtained for each trait (eigenvalue > 1.0) and more important, measures of level, self-schema, and consistency do not cohere on separate factors. The factors, though highly consistent across traits, show a complex pattern of relations among the measures, the specific nature of which could not have been predicted in advance.

Table 3 presents the results from the analysis of the measures of friendliness. Four factors account for 65% of the variance in these measures. The major factor (Factor 1) for friendliness and for the other two traits consists of two level measures and three self-schema measures (In Table 3, items 1, 2, 5, 6, and 7). The schema measures involving the judgments of others also load on this factor for two traits (items 10, 11, and 12). For all traits, Factor 2 is composed of level judgments on a trait when the judge is with significant others and the self-schema measure of confidence (items 3 and 8). In addition, across the three analyses, other level and self-schema measures load inconsistently on this factor. Factor 3 for all three traits is composed of the consistency measures. It also includes a mixed pattern of both level and self-schema measures. Factor 4 consists of the level measure comparing self to peers, and an inconsistent pattern of other level, self-schema, and consistency measures.

Study 2

Method

Participants and Procedures

One hundred and seventy-two undergraduate women from Cornell University were recruited through newspaper

¹ The reliability for the cross-situational consistency measure is very similar to the interitem correlations that D. Bem and Allen (1974) found for similar measures ($r = .22$).

Table 1
Correlations Among All Measures of Level, Self-Schemata, and Consistency, Averaged Across Three Trait Dimensions: Study 1

Measures	Level				Self-schemata								Consistency	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Level														
1. In general, how _____ are you?		.73	.44	.14	.38	.40	.46	.19	.16	.20	.22	.23	.24	.06
2. Trait _____ describes me/does not describe me.			.47	.12	.37	.48	.37	.19	.19	.24	.25	.29	.13	.19
3. How _____ are you with your parents, friends, etc.? (Mean of 10 judgments)				.14	.28	.27	.25	.48	.19	.18	.11	.20	.17	.23
4. Compared to your peers, how _____ are you?					.07	.16	.09	.10	.09	.15	.12	.12	.03	-.01
Self-schemata														
5. How important is trait _____ in describing yourself honestly to someone?						.39	.40	.16	.15	.24	.37	.25	.13	.01
6. Importance of trait _____ to your image of yourself?							.51	.11	.10	.18	.31	.28	.09	.12
7. Importance of trait _____ in understanding your personality and behavior?								.13	.08	.14	.31	.29	.11	.07
8. Confidence ratings of how _____ you are with 10 specific others.									.09	.09	.06	.08	.12	-.09
9. How easy is it for you to judge yourself on the trait _____?										.06	.03	.14	.06	-.01
10. How easy is it to judge a friend on trait _____?											.26	.14	.01	.04
11. Importance of trait _____ in understanding a friend's personality and behavior?												.21	.05	.05

Table 1 (continued)

Measures	Level								Self-schemata				Consistency			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14		
12. When attending a lecture, how frequently do you judge the speaker on trait _____?															.00	-.01
13. How much do you vary from one situation to another in how _____ you are?																.23
14. Standard deviation of how _____ you are with 10 specific others.																

advertisements and posters. They completed a set of personality questionnaires and were paid \$2.50.

Measures

The questionnaires we used in this study were originally developed to measure the three facets of personality for the trait of *friendliness*, as part of a study on memory for events. In addition, we included a less complete set of measures of the three facets for the traits of *conscientiousness*, *independence*, *honesty*, *sensitivity*, *anxiety*, *activity level*, and *assertiveness*.

Trait level. At least one of three different measures of level were obtained for each trait dimension. These included global self-reports for all eight trait dimensions (e.g., In general, how friendly are you?), self-reports about five traits in a number of different situations (The Cross-Situational Behavioral Survey (CSBS), D. Bem & Allen, 1974), and a reliable personality inventory (CPI Sociability Scale).

Self-schema We adapted two versions of Markus's (1977) self-report measures of self-schema to make them conceptually independent of overall level. Each was administered to approximately half the sample. In addition, we adapted the trait-cued autobiography method used by McGuire and Padawer-Singer (1976). Participants were asked to spend 15 min writing a short description of those aspects of their personality that they thought were most important in understanding their own behavior. They were given a list of 24 traits they could choose to use, "because previous participants have found the list helpful in organizing their answers". Two coders coded these short essays as schematic for a trait dimension if the participant used a relevant cue from the cue list, a synonym of it, or an antonym for it. When the coders disagreed on the presence of a cue, the participant was classified as schematic because at least one of the coders had found some mention of the dimension in the autobiography. We obtained the trait-cued autobiography measure of self-schema for seven traits.

Cross-situational consistency. We measured cross-situational consistency for each trait through at least one of the two measures used by D. Bem and Allen (1974). These included a direct self-report (e.g., "How much do you vary from one situation to another in how friendly you are?") for all eight traits and the variance in participants' level judgments in a number of social situations (CSBS) for five traits.

Results

Pearson product-moment correlations were computed among the measures of level, cross-situational consistency, and self-schema. Table 4 presents means of the correlations for the eight trait dimensions averaging across measures for each trait, and Table 5 presents the means of the correlations averaging across traits for each measure. As in Study 1, measures of overall level show the most convergence, with a mean correlation across measures and traits of .57. The mean internal consistency of the schema measures ($r = .21$)

Table 2
Correlations Between Measures of Level, Self-Schemata, and Consistency for the Traits of Friendliness, Intelligence, and Articulatness: Study 1

Measure	Level	Schemata	Consistency
Friendliness			
Level	.32	.22	.17
Schemata		.18	.09
Consistency			.24
Intelligence			
Level	.37	.28	.13
Schemata		.22	.06
Consistency			.24
Articulateness			
Level	.33	.20	.14
Schemata		.20	.04
Consistency			.22

and of the cross-situational consistency measures ($r = .22$) were substantially less.

Tables 4 and 5 also show little discriminant validity among the various measures. As in Study 1, the mean correlations of level and schema ($r = .30$) and of level and cross-situational consistency ($r = .34$) were as high as the internal consistency of the self-schema and consistency measures.

Summary and Discussion

We have shown that measures of self-schema and cross-situational consistency lack discriminant validity. Table 6 summarizes our evidence by averaging the convergent validity correlations and the discriminant validity correlations across traits, measures, and studies. It shows that measures of self-schema and cross-situational consistency, although designed to be independent of overall trait level, are not independent. Instead the correlation of each with overall level is as high as its internal consistency. The measurement models for the cross-situational consistency approach and the self-schema approach to personality clearly fail to reflect the conceptual models.

Schema As a Processing Model

Markus and Bem might dismiss this criticism of the schema model. Markus (1977) and S. Bem (1981) defined self-schema in terms of the personal significance of well-articulated cognitive structures, yet they originally and intentionally measured these structures in terms of overall level. Markus and her colleagues (1982) have dropped personal significance or importance from their definition of self-schema and yet still consider the schema model a supplement to or an alternative to the traditional trait model of personality. They would argue that the schema model is valuable, even if one cannot measure it independently of a person's level on a trait. The schema model provides the cognitive mechanism through which trait level has its effects on beliefs and behavior.

The mechanism is the workings of an autonomous belief system, formed through the differential experience of people who differ on their level on a trait.

With social experience we gain a diversity of self-relevant information that becomes organized into cognitive structures. It is by means of these structures that we categorize, explain, and evaluate our behavior in various focal domains, (Markus et al., 1982, p. 38).

Markus and Bem would argue that the schema concept is the preferred explanation for the individual differences in the way people process information about themselves. According to this reasoning, the value of the schema model rests on the discriminant validity of underlying cognitive processes and not on the discriminant validity of a personality measurement.

For example, Markus and her students have found that compared with people who are aschematic, people who score as self-schematic on a trait dimension make schema-related judgments about themselves more quickly and consistently, offer more behavioral evidence for their self-judgments, make more confident and extreme predictions about future behavior, and change their self-conceptions less when given counterevidence.

Both Markus and S. Bem conclude from this type of evidence that schematic people have an elaborated cognitive structure that

enables them to process relevant information about themselves quickly and efficiently. They both assume that the self-inference strategies that schematics use are qualitatively different from those used by aschematics. Having assumed the existence of schemata, researchers are now trying to distinguish between theoretical types, particularly between self-schemata and gender schemata. (See S. Bem, 1982, for a skillful explication of differences between the two.)

However, we believe this investigation is premature. The data on the speed of, confidence in, and richness of self-descriptions are not compelling evidence that some people form their self-descriptions through any sort of schema processing. We have shown that putative schematics and aschematic individuals also differ on trait level. We believe their different levels on traits can account for the

data, without postulating qualitatively different processing strategies between schematic and aschematic individuals.

For example, consider the data on speed of processing. Both Markus (Markus, 1977; Markus et al., 1982) and S. Bem (1981; citing data from Girvin, 1978 and Markus et al., 1982) argue that the greater speed with which schematic compared with aschematic participants endorse schema-consistent personality descriptions is evidence for the schema model of personality. According to these authors, to answer the question, "Are you independent?" or "Are you nurturant?" schematic people need only look up the correct answer in their preexisting and well-structured self-descriptions or gender-schemata, whereas aschematic people must use different cognitive processes, for example, reviewing and evaluating difficult-to-abstract behavioral evidence. However,

Table 3
Principle Component Analysis With Oblique Rotation for Measures of Friendliness

Measures	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Level				
1. In general, how friendly are you?	.73	.41	-.15	.14
2. Friendly described me/does not describe me.	.81	.44	-.02	.18
3. How friendly are you with your parents, friends, etc.? (Mean of 10 judgments)	.38	.84	-.09	.11
4. Compared to your peers, how friendly are you?	.18	.24	-.23	-.64
Self-schemata				
5. How important is friendliness in describing yourself honestly to someone?	.68	.16	.16	.09
6. Importance of friendliness to your image of yourself?	.77	.05	-.21	.29
7. Importance of friendliness in understanding your personality and behavior?	.74	-.03	-.09	.28
8. Confidence ratings of how friendly you are with 10 specific others.	.15	.77	-.25	.35
9. How easy is it for you to judge yourself on friendliness?	.03	.40	.16	-.04
10. How easy is it to judge a friend on the trait friendly?	.10	.13	-.03	.76
11. Importance of friendliness in understanding a friend's personality and behavior?	.41	-.23	.31	.64
12. When attending a lecture, how frequently do you judge the speaker on friendliness?	.43	.16	.64	.19
Consistency				
13. How much do you vary from one situation to another in how friendly you are?	-.38	-.01	.56	-.40
14. Standard deviation of how friendly you are with 10 specific others.	-.22	-.19	.63	-.08

we can adduce at least two nonschema explanations for why schematic people respond faster than aschematic ones.

The threshold account. A threshold account assumes that people apply a trait dimension to themselves when their level on that trait exceeds some subjective threshold and that, on the average, this threshold does not systematically differ among people. Quick responses occur when the individuals' level on the trait is unambiguously distinct from the threshold, that is, when they are extreme on the trait. A closer, more time consuming comparison is required for traits near the subjective threshold, that is, for traits judged moderately self-descriptive. Threshold for-

mulations of the self-referential judgment process have garnered considerable empirical support (Goldberg, 1963; Jackson & Helmes, 1979; Jackson & Paunonen, 1980; Rogers, 1971; Rogers, Kuiper, & Rogers, 1979; Voyce & Jackson, 1977) in the personality measurement literature. Consistent with this formulation, consistency and latency of response to self-ascriptions for a given dimension have been shown to depend on the individual's level on that dimension (Kuncel, 1973). According to the threshold account, aschematics take longer because of the difficulty they have in making discriminations when their level on a trait is close to their subjective threshold for calling it self-descriptive.

A similar argument can be made to explain findings (Girvin, 1978; Markus et al., 1982) that sex-typed (i.e., schematic) people were faster at judging sex-congruent traits to be self-descriptive and slower at judging sex-incongruent traits to be self-descriptive. Non-sex-typed (i.e., aschematic) people did not show these differences in speed of response. By definition, the schematic people are more extreme in the positive direction on sex-congruent traits judged self-descriptive than on cross-sex-congruent traits judged self-descriptive. On the average, a schematic man would judge himself as more assertive than he is artistic, even though he might apply both terms to himself; any deviations would presumably be the result of measurement error. Aschematic people are by definition equally extreme on sex-congruent and cross-sex-congruent traits judged self-descriptive. For example, an aschematic man might judge himself to be highly assertive and artistic, and equally so. As a result, the latency differences between the two types of traits observed for schematic but not for aschematic participants reflects aschematic individuals' choice between equally applicable traits.

Evaluation of behavioral evidence. Evaluating behavioral evidence is a second process through which people can decide whether a trait is self-descriptive. This process can also account for the differences between schematic and aschematic individuals' speed of response. Those who show an extreme level on a trait are likely to have had more and more consistent occasions in which they have acted consistently with the trait. In reviewing evidence

Table 4
Correlations Between Measures of Level, Self-Schemata, and Consistency Presented by Trait Study 2

Measures	Level	Schemata	Consistency
Friendliness			
Level	.62	.22	.40
Schemata		.20	.24
Consistency			.27
Sensitivity			
Level	.49	.31	.41
Schemata		.33	.09
Consistency			.19
Independence			
Level	— ^a	.26	.53
Schemata		.19	.19
Consistency			— ^a
Honesty			
Level	.45	.30	.37
Schemata		.27	.09
Consistency			.13
Conscientiousness			
Level	.69	.33	.49
Schemata		.23	.19
Consistency			.30
Assertiveness			
Level	.59	.20	.20
Schemata		— ^a	.00
Consistency			.20
Activity Level			
Level	— ^a	.33	.42
Schemata		.15	.16
Consistency			— ^a
Anxiety			
Level	— ^a	.42	-.43
Schemata		.16	-.31
Consistency			— ^a

^a Only one measure of this facet was collected for this trait.

Table 5
Correlations Among all Measures of Level, Self-Schemata, and Consistency Averaged Across Eight Trait Dimensions: Study 2

Trait dimensions	Level			Self-schemata			Consistency	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. California Personality Inventory Sociability item		.53	.64	.03	.33	.08	.37	.32
2. In general, how _____ are you?			.59	.20	.52	.36	.36	.18
3. Cross-Situational Behavior Survey Scale mean				.14	.29	.35	.43	.44
4. Trait-cued autobiography					.22	.20	.03	.01
5. Importance self-report I							.21	.11
6. Importance self-report II							.15	.03
7. How much do you vary from one situation to another in how _____ you are?								.22
8. Cross-Situational Behavior Survey Scale variance								

about their independence, for example, schematic people will be able to retrieve occasions during which they acted independently more quickly. In addition, the evidence they retrieve should be more internally consistent. As a result, they should have an easier and quicker time integrating the evidence and then making their decision.

Similar reasoning can account for Markus' behavioral instance data and subjective likelihood data. These data show that people offer the greatest behavioral evidence for those traits that are most self-descriptive and view engaging in behaviors related to these traits in the future as relatively likely.

Cross-Situational Consistency Evidence

Our data on cross-situational consistency measures appear somewhat at odds with the boost in predictive validity reported by researchers who have used them in the past. We would not argue on the basis of our sparse data on these measures that trait level and consistency as commonly measured are completely overlapping constructs. The utility of using consistency and schema measures as moderator variables after trait level has been statistically controlled remains an empirical question. Our data are consistent, however, with recent research by Mischel and Peake (1982), which strongly questions the predictive utility of the trait based cross-situational consistency approach. Mischel and Peake (1982) report that both in D. Bem and Allen's (1974) original study and in their own replication of that study that people who report high self consistency on a trait do not show greater cross-situational consistency in behavior than those people who report low consistency. (They do, however, evoke greater consistency in other people's descriptions of

Table 6
Correlations Among Measures of Level, Self-schemata, and Consistency Averaged Across Measures and Traits for Studies 1 and 2

Measures	Level	Schemata	Consistency
Level	.41	.26	.26
Schemata		.20	.08
Consistency			.22

their behavior.) Consistency models empirically related to traditional trait models have not been proven to provide any great enhancement in behavioral predictability beyond a simple trait level model.

Conclusions

In the aftermath of Mischel's critique of the trait approach to personality, personality theorists adopted two responses. One was to emphasize an interactionist approach to personality (e.g., Magnusson & Endler, 1977), and the other was to explore other models of personality; the cross-situational consistency model and the self-schema model. We have shown that at least operationally, neither of these models is distinguishable from the traditional trait model it was designed to supplement or replace. We have shown that measures of self-schema and of cross-situational consistency correlate as highly with overall trait level as they do among themselves. In addition, we have argued that the concept of trait level (and the different experiences that go with different trait levels) can account for the evidence about individual differences in the speed, confidence, and richness of self-descriptions, without appeal to schema. And, similarly, we argued that trait level may account for whatever predictive utility trait based cross-situational consistency models can claim.

As yet, neither self-schema models nor cross-situational models have led to a strong predictive theory of personality. Our data suggest that these models are not, in practice, as innovative as once hoped. We concur with Mischel and Peake who state

the pursuit of person-situation interaction will require a theoretical reconceptualization of both personality and situation constructs themselves, not just more clever methods for applying everyday trait terms to people's behavior in particular contexts. (1982, p. 748)

As self-schema theorists take their cognitive process model from the laboratory and attempt to form a predictive personality model in the social world, they too may find that dependence on the trait model has undermined their endeavor from the beginning. Only a thorough evaluation of the relations between schema, cross-situational consistency, and traditional trait models both in theory

and as measured will enable personality prospectors to extract the different insights of each or persuade them to seek, ultimately, an entirely new stream in which to pan.

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