Phone-based metric as a predictor for basic personality traits

Basic personality traits are believed to be expressed in, and predictable from, smart phone data. We investigate the extent of this predictability using data (n = 636) from the Copenhagen Network Study, which to our knowledge is the most extensive study concerning smartphone usage and personality traits. Based on phone usage patterns, earlier studies have reported surprisingly high predictability of all Big Five personality traits. We predict personality trait tertiles (low, medium, high) from a set of behavioral variables extracted from the data, and find that only extraversion can be predicted significantly better (35.6%) than by a null model. Finally, we show that the higher predictabilities in the literature are likely due to overfitting on small datasets.