Personality and Learning in the Classroom: How Personality Traits and Learning Styles Relate to High School GPA

Soranno, Victoria (School: Cascia Hall Preparatory School)

This project studied the correlation between learning styles, personality traits, and high school GPA. It aimed to provide a guide to make learning more efficient by taking advantage of one's innate characteristics. 40 participants in the 12th grade enrolled in schools spanning the central and northeastern regions of Oklahoma were tested. Participants performed 4 tests using the VARK learning styles (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, reading/writing) and were quizzed over their memory of the material both immediately post-testing and one week later. The scores from both quizzes were averaged for each style. Participants also took the 300-Item IPIP-NEO personality test to measure the Big Five personality traits (extraversion, openness, conscientiousness, agreeableness, neuroticism). All three categories were correlated with each other. Only the personality trait of conscientiousness had a positive correlation to GPA. The auditory, reading/writing, and kinesthetic styles had positive correlations to GPA. Extraversion had a positive correlation to the visual style. Agreeableness and openness had positive correlations to the auditory, reading/writing, and kinesthetic styles. Conscientiousness had positive correlations to the auditory and reading/writing styles. Neuroticism had positive correlations to the visual and kinesthetic styles. High school students can use this study as a guide to how they may be able to increase their understanding of classroom material and, subsequently, their GPAs. By being aware of dominating personality traits, one can choose to review materials with a learning style correlated with success. Workplaces can also utilize this information to improve learning outcomes in training programs.

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