

THE ROLE OF PERSONALITY AS A PREDICTOR OF BEHAVIOR AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF HIGH ACHIEVING ADOLESCENTS

Yulia Kovas

Tomsk State University (Tomsk, Russia)

Maxim Likhanov

Elina Tsigeman

Sirius, Educational Centre «Talent and Success» (Sochi, Russia)

Kostas Papageorgiou

School of Psychology, Queen's University Belfast (Belfast, United Kingdom)

Findings suggest that personality traits play a role in school achievement. The present investigation was aimed at exploring the associations between personality, behavior and school achievement in a unique sample of adolescents, selected for outstanding achievement. Method. We assessed the Dark Triad (DT) traits; the Big Five (B5) traits; pro-social behavior and behavioral difficulties in a sample of 1,191 adolescents (14 to 18 years of age), selected for outstanding achievements in four fields of ability— Science, Arts, Literature and Sports. We explored sex differences and educational track differences in individual traits and in networks of traits. Furthermore, we tested direct, moderated and mediated associations between personality, behavior and school achievement (self-reported grades and actual grades in state exams). While mean-level trait changes across sexes and educational tracks

were present (e.g. males generally reported higher scores on the DT than females), the resulting networks were similar between males and females and across tracks. Narcissism was unique among the DT traits predicting fewer behavioral difficulties. Personality traits predicted a significant amount of variance in behavioral difficulties, pro-social behavior and self-reported school achievement, but they did not predict school achievement as assessed by state exams. This investigation provides unique insights into the personality and behavior of this highly-selected sample of adolescents. We will discuss some of the theoretical implications of these findings for understanding the factors that influence performance in high performers, as well as implications in terms of optimizing educational outcomes and well-being of adolescents.