

The effect of Personality Trait on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students with
different bands in Hong Kong

Abstract

In view of the Three-tier secondary schooling education system in Hong Kong, students who are less capable in academic will be allocated to school with lower band. Due to the fact that there is only one curriculum for secondary education, students from different bands indeed demonstrated a large variation in the academic result. Therefore, to examine the reasons for the difference in academic performance of schools with different bands, the focus of this study was to investigate whether there is any significant effect of Big-Five personality traits on academic performance, especially to those Band 3 students. Study was conducted by collecting data (N=91) from three different secondary schools (Band 1, 2 and 3) and academic performance was assessed by their first-term core subjects' results (Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics and Liberal Studies). In addition, several predictors such as study time, gender and parents' education level were also examined with regard to both academic performance and personality traits. The analysis suggested that, in predicting academic result, the personality factor added more explanatory power than if it was excluded since the variance explained was enhanced by incorporating the Big Five personality traits as predictor. This suggested that the psychological aspect did contribute to students' academic performance. Among the Big five personality traits, Conscientiousness was the only trait which found to be significantly correlated with the academic result while the remaining traits demonstrated no significant correlation. More importantly, the findings indicated that the effect of "Conscientiousness" was only significant to those Band 3's students. This presented result suggested that in addition to the cognitive ability, personality trait (Conscientiousness) could facilitate the learning, particular to those low achievers. Possible explanations for and the limitations of this personality-performance relationship were further discussed. In order to enhance the validity