

ATHLETIC TRAINING STUDENTS PERSONALITIES ACCORDING TO THE NEO FIVE-FACTOR PERSONALITY INVENTORY

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Objective: There is a dearth of research pertaining to the psychological assessment of athletic training students (ATS) personalities. The purposes of this study were to obtain initial baseline data on the prominent personalities of ATS and explore how sex and education levels relate to ATS personality types measured by the NEO Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI). **Design and Settings:** The NEO-FFI measures the five major factors of personality: neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. It is a 60-item instrument that has individual's rate 12 sets of 5 statements using a 5-point Likert-type scale anchored by 0 (strongly disagree) and 4 (strongly agree). Research literature provides strong support for reliability and construct validity via Cronbach's alpha with median score (.73) and test-retest coefficients (.63 to .87). We performed a convenience sampling of our target population of ATS from a large, southeastern Division I institution. **Subjects:** Students declaring athletic training as a major field of study were selected. There were 48 participants (M=24; F=24), average age of 21.49 ± 1.69 years, with education levels of 5 Sophomores, 14 Juniors, and 29 Seniors. We received 48 completed instruments of a possible 86 resulting in a 56% response rate. **Measurements:** Descriptive statistics comparing education level and sex were calculated for each of the five domains. These means were compared to normative data for NEO-FFI scoring. Five separate sex (men:women) by education level (Sophomore:Junior:Senior) ANOVAs with mean NEO subscale scores as the dependant variable were performed. Age was entered as a covariate because research literature supports personality variation with maturation. **Results:** Men, women and combined mean scores respectively are: neuroticism, 17 ± 7.59 , 21 ± 7.91 , and 19 ± 7.91 ; extraversion, 31 ± 6.16 , 32 ± 5.19 , and 31 ± 5.64 ; openness to experience, 25 ± 3.77 , 27 ± 5.40 , and 26 ± 4.71 ; agreeableness, 30 ± 5.52 , 30 ± 5.56 , and 29 ± 5.48 ; and conscientiousness were, 36 ± 4.34 , 33 ± 4.82 , and 35 ± 4.69 . Sex significantly affected openness ($p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .091$) when the effect of age was removed. Education level significantly affected neuroticism ($p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .146$). **Conclusion:** Men scored significantly lower on openness thereby warranting investigation into pedagogical interventions that may enhance the undergraduate experience of men. Additionally, juniors had a significant increase in neuroticism that may be attributed to the introduction of the professional phase of athletic training education. Implications for educators may be adjusted program duration and acclimatization.