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Non-Technical Summary

Full title: *Noncognitive consequences of education: personality and other noncognitive psychological attributes in persons with different levels of education.*

Abstract

Objective: The objective of this project was to describe cognitive and noncognitive characteristics of mind in persons with different levels of formal education. Cognitive correlations of formal education have been thoroughly studied. Noncognitive correlates, however, are considerably less known. The aims of the formal education are usually related to the development of both cognitive and noncognitive characteristics of mind. Whether formal education reaches its noncognitive goals needs to be understood better.

Methods: Native-born Estonian men ($N = 1495$), 18-23 years old, participated in a study on relationships between the level of education and noncognitive characteristics of mind (so-called Characteristic Adaptations: attitudes, values, self-concept, etc.). In addition to Characteristic Adaptations, the model included parents' level of education, personality dimensions (neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, conscientiousness), cognitive ability, and word meaning structure variables that may mediate the relationships between the level of education and Characteristic Adaptations.

Findings: It was found that, after the effect of background variables on the dependent variables was taken into account, the level of education was still related to noncognitive constructs in the model (collectivism, coping style, aggression, attitudes towards alcohol and narcotics, and self-esteem).

The results of the study suggested that higher level of education was related to lower levels of

- Familism dimension of Collectivism
- Physical Aggression and Anger
- Attitudes towards narcotics and the number of reasons why to use alcohol or narcotics

and higher levels of

- Problem oriented Coping Style
- General Self-Esteem

In the statistical model, the level of education had both direct effect on the noncognitive characteristics of mind and indirect effect, mediated by the dominant type of word meaning structure. This psychological construct characterizes in which way information is processed; word meaning structure is content-independent.

Conclusions:

The higher level of formal education is related to adaptive noncognitive characteristics of mind. In school system more attention is given to the content of education, particular facts, values, attitudes. On the basis of results of this study it can be suggested that more attention should be paid to the dominant type of word meaning structure, to the way in which the information is processed.

Keywords: education, personality, attitudes, values, word meaning structure