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Correlations between Innate and Environmental Traits and the Attitudes` Assessment towards Active Listening Among Early Childhood Educators

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to examine the correlation between innate (neuroticism and openness) and environmental (self-esteem and emotional regulation strategies) personality traits and the attitudes` assessment toward active listening (AL) among early childhood educators in Israel. Accordingly, this study presents a multipath analysis model exploring the correlations between all those variables. In this study, AL was evaluated using the active listening attitude scale (ALAS) questionnaire, which measures a person-centered attitude through three key factors: “listening attitude,” which identifies values that support active listening; “listening skill,” which represents the technical expression of active listening; and “conversation opportunity,” which identifies listening situations conducive to AL.

AL is perceived as an interpersonal communication skill that encourages listeners to integrate multi-sensory and cognitive processes to produce positive and supportive outcomes. To facilitate AL, listeners should be emotionally stable, well-regulated, and possess high self-esteem. Early educators have a decisive influence on children's behavior, so this study examines personality traits and the educators' perception towards active listening.

A survey conducted among 390 early childhood educators, both female and male, indicated that both innate and environmental emotional traits correlate with two major factors of AL: “listening attitude” and “listening skill”. The path analysis model supports the perception that an effective and supportive listener must have a stable, open and curious emotional foundation, along with emotional regulation skills and high self-esteem.

Keywords: Active listening, Empathy, Traits, Early Childhood Educators