

IMPACT OF BEHAVIORAL FACTORS ON GPA FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This research explores various behavioral factors and their relationship to success for academically talented students at an upper-level residential school located in the south-central US. Students in their junior and senior years were given the DISC (Dominance, Influence, Steadiness, Conscientiousness) behavioral instrument and tracked over a two year period to identify behavioral factors leading to higher grade point averages. Data were collected from 211 students, including academic and personal demographic information along with DISC scores.

Success in this study was measured as the outgoing grade point average (GPA) of the student. Students were partitioned into three groups according to their GPA ranking (independent variable). Eight areas of behavior (dependent variables) were compared across the three GPA groupings. ANOVA was used to assess for differences in the mean values of the dependent variables. Results indicate that three behavioral factors - Analysis of Data, Organized Workplace and Frequent Change - had significantly different mean scores between the three GPA groupings. The other five behavioral factors did not have significantly different mean scores. The findings can also be used to help improve retention at the institution and better predict those who may be at most risk of attrition.

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