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The Relationship Between Personality Traits and Evaluative Conditioning

Thursday, September 11, 2025 3:30 PM (10 minutes)

Evaluative Conditioning (EC) is a type of evaluative learning, defined as the change in valence of neutral stimuli (Conditioned Stimuli, CSs) due to spatiotemporal pairings with positive or negative valenced stimuli (Unconditioned Stimuli, USs). This EC effect is moderated by the contingency memory of CS-US pairs, without which there is little or no EC effect. Previous studies have shown that personality traits, assessed through the Big Five and HEXACO-PI measures, can moderate EC effects. In particular, high levels of Neuroticism - specifically its Anxiety facet - and Agreeableness were associated with larger EC effects. The present study investigated the relationship between EC and personality traits, assessing them through the NP100 questionnaire, a measure of more specific personality characteristics at the item level, called nuances, that can also be aggregated to reflect the six factors of the HEXACO-PI. Participants (N = 350) completed the personality questionnaire, the EC procedure, and a contingency memory task. The six factors reflecting HEXACO-PI personality traits were extracted from the NP100 items through a principal component analysis. Analyses confirmed the EC effect and the moderation role of contingency memory, personality traits, and their interaction on the effect of US valence on CS evaluations. The results are relevant for both personality and learning fields.

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No

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