The relationship between student personality profiles and the constructs of tolerance of ambiguity and resilience as indicators of well-being

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**Abstract Theme** - Selecting for personal characteristics

**Background and Aims**
Uncertainty is a ubiquitous and inevitable component of clinical practice\(^1\). Resilience is predictive of positive emotions and coping\(^2,3\). Personality may influence how individuals develop resilience and their ability to deal with ambiguity. This study examined the dominant personality trait profiles and their association with levels of resilience and tolerance of ambiguity as constructs of well-being in medical students.

**Methods**
Medical students (N=339; mean age 24.6 years, SD=3.5) completed the Temperament and Character Inventory\(^4\), measures of ambiguity\(^5\), and resilience\(^3\). Demographics were also gathered. Latent profile analysis on the TCI identified personality trait profiles. Bivariate analyses tested for differences in ambiguity and resilience between trait profiles.

**Results**
The proportion of demographic variables was not different. The latent profile analysis revealed two trait profiles. Profile 1 (n=182; 54%) was characterised by low Harm Avoidance; very high Persistence, Self-Directedness and Cooperativeness. Profile 2 (n=157) showed average Harm Avoidance; average-to-high Persistence, Self-Directedness and Cooperativeness. Profile 1 was significantly associated with higher levels of tolerance of ambiguity (p<.001) and resilience (p<.001) in comparison to Profile 2.

**Conclusions / Recommendations**
Although both Profiles describe individuals with mature and organised personalities, Profile 1 was associated with constructs known to be beneficial to students’ well-being. Understanding the profile of traits which contribute to constructs of well-being provides greater insight into students' tendencies toward feelings of resilience and dealing with ambiguity. This information adds to debate around selection processes and may be beneficial to educators as low resilience and ambiguity tolerance is representative of reoccurring problems with students.

**References**