

PERSONALITY TRAITS AS DETERMINANT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN CROSS STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study examines personality traits as determinant in English Language academic performance among secondary school students. It was conducted in some secondary schools spread across eighteen Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Cross River State, Nigeria. Six hypotheses were formulated and four instruments were used to generate data: International Personality Instrument Pool (IPIP) and English Language Academic Performance Test (ELAPT) were used to collect data from the seven hundred and ninety-six students randomly sampled as participants. The data was analysed with multiple regressions and analysis of covariance (ANCOVA). The finding revealed that there exists significant relationship between personality traits, gender differences due to personality traits and English Language academic performance. It was recommended that among the five factors model personality traits, openness to experience, conscientiousness, and low level of neuroticism should be encouraged, among students. Likewise, students with high level neurotic tendencies should be assisted through psychotherapy interventions. It is also recommended that teachers should consider gender differences due to personality traits among students since males and females are prone to certain types of personality traits for their academic success.

Background to the Study

English Language is the most important medium of instruction at all levels of the Nigerian education. One unique aspect of English Language is that it is a subject itself and it is used to teach other subjects. A good command of the language is necessary for every student; this is to enable them to understand other subjects being taught. FRN (2004) stated clearly the functions of English Language in the National Education Policy and they include: "English Language shall be the medium of instruction in the primary, secondary and tertiary level of education. It shall be one of the core subjects that will facilitate a student to offer any course in higher institution." This function gives English language a better and unique outlook because it is not only a course of study in schools but also the official language in Nigeria and verbal communication in educational system. It is fundamentally expected that the level of accomplishment of students in English Language will always be visible on their performance in other subject areas.

In spite of this implication attached to the English Language as a compulsory subject in secondary schools and the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME), students' performance in English Language over the years in the West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE) performance fluctuates and this calls for great concern. Fakeye (2011) pointed out that Nigerian secondary school students have problems in the learning of English Language as revealed in their performances in the external examinations. Krashen (2002) identifies 'psychological factors as among these factors strongly inhibiting English Language academic performance'. Chamorro-Premuzic, & Furnham (2005) assert personality traits to be among these psychological factors hindering academic performance.

Extensive researches have been done on personality traits, on students' academic performance, using samples in various countries. This study is on personality traits as determinant of English Language academic performance among secondary school students in Nigeria.

Allport (1966) claims the best way to be aware of the differences between individuals is by understanding their personality traits. This is because personality traits play important roles in individual lives. Gerrig (2013) defines personality traits as labels used for describing enduring characteristics which influence someone's behaviour across situations. McCrae (2001) describes personality traits as the endogenous basic tendencies that within a cultural context, give rise to habits, attitudes, skills, beliefs and other characteristic adaptations. The consistent pattern of beliefs, feelings, motives, and conducts that students' display across situations is referred to as personality traits. It reflects basic dimension on individual differences; this dimension implies, a specific trait could be low, medium, or high. Personality traits are important because they describe stable patterns of behaviour that persist for long period of time (Caspi, Roberts, & Shiner, 2005). Hakimi, Hejazi & Lavasani (2011) further posit that researchers and educators can recognise students' individual differences by taking personality traits into consideration. This implies that the importance of personality traits can be visible in schools through students' academic performance. There is a body of evidence suggesting that nearly all personality trait measures can be put and simplified under the Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality traits, which as a result has been named the "Big-Five" (Goldberg, 1990). The flexibility of the FFM is known to communalise right through all cultures and stay quite constant (McCrae, & Costa, 1997).

According to Mayungbo (2016), personality traits comprise openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism. He further states that

these are strong predictors of subjective wellbeing; however, studies on subjective wellbeing have been focused on the affective aspect of personality to the neglect of other dimensions. In this vein the FFM will elicit those neglected dimensions in this study as connected with English Language academic performance.

Statement of the Problem

The secondary school students need effective and efficient English language to function appropriately or perform better in all academic endeavours, because English language is the tool of communication in our post primary and higher institutions as well as the approved official language of the country. It is the medium of instruction in our schools and a compulsory school subject that must be passed at all levels of education in Nigeria. Unfortunately, despite the importance of this subject in daily activities, performance in external examinations like the WASSCE results fluctuates over the years. Despite its academic nature which the students use for guiding their classroom behaviours, its negative result affects the lives of the students’ families and society at large.

This negative result in most cases brings about a high rate of student dropout and idleness at home. Also, the desire for future academic progress is being thwarted and the ability to gain meaningful employment with the WASSCE becomes an illusion, as almost every employer of labour demands for five credits including in English Language. Negative performance in this subject triggers a high dropout rate from schools and this may likely result in these students engaging in criminal activities, thereby affecting the safety and peaceful co-existence between the society and these dropout students.

Table 1: Statistics of Entry and Performance in English Language from 2014-2018 May/June WASSCE in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Year	Total sat in the federation	Total sat in cross river state	%	Credit in 1-6 in cross river state	%	Failure to meet credit pass
2014	1673767	45914	2.74	10098	21.99	35816
2015	1575888	38914	2.42	13437	35.22	25477
2016	1524832	36156	2.55	23570	60.85	12586
2017	1558349	39228	2.52	21521	54.86	17707
2018	1553727	36401	2.34	19573	43.30	16828

Source: Federal Ministry of Education (National Bureau of Statistics: Comparison of States performance May/June WASSCE 2014 - 2018).

A cursory look at the table shows that the students' performance fluctuated over the years. Several factors such as the students' exposure to the target language, attitudinal factors and teaching styles, socioeconomic and cultural background of the students and so on impacted on these numbers. Although various interventions had been made by stakeholders to ensure good stable performance among students (such as employment of efficient English Language teachers and free English Language textbooks, in public secondary schools in the state) in spite of this contribution English Language academic performance still fluctuated between high and low.

However, there have been diverse reactive strategies, calling for attention on this unstable performance as suggested by Zweig & Webster (2004) and Woolfolk & Hoy (2006) that personality traits, predict academic performance. Hence, the study focused on this factor as determinant of English Language academic performance among secondary school students in Cross River state.

The Theoretical Framework:

Five Factors Model Theory (McCrae & Costa, 1997)

Five Factor Model

According to McCrae and Costa, the *five factor model* of personality is a hierarchical organisation of personality traits in terms of five basic dimensions: openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism (OCEAN). It is a theory of personality traits; which represents the dominant conceptualization of personality structure. Human individuality is invariably expressed in cultural, social, and interpersonal forms - interpersonal and social behaviours which emanate from individuals, with their own personality traits (McCrae & Costa, 1997). The scholars explained that personality trait researchers spent many decades, enumerating importance of individual differences in enduring dispositions and eventually it became clear that most traits are related to one or more of just five basic factors and these traits reside at the highest level of the personality hierarchy.

The Five Factor Model can be assessed by self-reports or the ratings of knowledgeable informants and it can serve to characterise individuals for a long period of time (McCrae & Costa, 2006). The FFM personality traits influence academic performance because behavioural tendency reflects personality traits which in turn affect certain habits of the students (De Feyter, Ralf, Claudia & Dries, 2012). This of course has an influence on academic success or failure - for example, traits like *openness to experience* includes other facets like students' adventure, unusual ideas, imagination and variety of

experience. This trait differentiates imaginative students from unadventurous students. Those who are open to experience are intellectual inquisitive. They are more resourceful and more aware of their academic feelings.

Conscientiousness students always display self-control, act dutifully and aim for accomplishment against measure outside expectations. Students that have this trait demonstrate a preference rather than impulsive behaviour. *Extraversion* trait are characterised by students' positive emotions and propensity to seek out stimulation in the company of other students. The trait is distinct by marked commitment with the external world. Students in this group tend to be passionate and action-oriented.

Agreeableness trait is a tendency to be concerned, trustworthy, and cooperative with other students or teachers rather than mistrustful and antagonistic towards school and teachers. *Neuroticism* students are those who habitually experience negative emotions that may likely affect their academic performance. Students who are markedly high in neuroticism are emotionally reactive and susceptible to stress. They are more likely to read normal situations as intimidating and minor frustration as hopelessly difficult.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to examine personality traits, as determinant of English Language academic performance among secondary school students. Specifically, this study served two purposes:

- 1) determine the relationship between personality traits and English Language academic performance among secondary school students;
- 2) assess if there is a gender-based difference due to personality traits on English Language academic performance among secondary school students;

Research Questions:

The following research questions guided this study:

- 1) Is there any relationship between personality traits and English Language academic performance among secondary school students?
- 2) What will be the gender-based difference in English Language academic performance among secondary school students due to personality traits?

Research Hypotheses

These research hypotheses guided this study.

- 1) Personality traits will not have significant relationship with the English Language academic performance among secondary school students.
- 2) There will be no significant gender-based difference due to personality traits in the English Language academic performance among secondary school students.

Concept of Personality Traits

The concept of personality study began with Hippocrates in 370 B.C.E (Fazeli, 2012). Hippocrates conceptualised that personality traits and human behaviours are based on four different temperament associated with fluids of the body known as humours: (choleric, melancholic, sanguine and phlegmatic). According to Hippocrates: Choleric is yellow bile from the liver); melancholic – black bile from the kidneys; sanguine – red blood from the heart and phlegmatic – white phlegm from the lungs (Clark & Watson 2008). These four temperaments have distinct causes of behaviour in human body. For example the choleric person is passionate, ambitious and bold, melancholic person is reserved, anxious and unhappy, the sanguine person is joyful, eager, and optimistic and the phlegmatic person is calm, reliable and thoughtful (Clark & Watson 2008).

These Hippocrates views of personality traits raised a lot of awareness by scholars in this field. The one that caught controversy and popularity was that of Eysenck 1947. He conceptualised that behaviour could be represented by two different dimensions: Introversion/Extroversion (E); Neuroticism/Stability (N) and Psychotics (P) explained psychotics as lacking in empathy, cruel, aggressive and troublesome (Eysenck 1992).

This Eysenck personality model led to the formulation of Five-Factor Model or FFM by Robert McCrae and Paul Costa's, which describes personality traits in terms of five broad factors. (Openness to experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism) The five traits are shown to be consistent and stable over time (McCrae & Costa, 2006). It was this study that paved way for the five-factor model to stand despite criticism, because it includes a lot of previous empirical material as well as theoretical attempts in its new model. Matthews, Deary, & Whiteman (2013) agreed that the tradition of studying personality traits that has gained a lot of attention over the last few decades is the one focusing on the five-factor model.

Personality Traits and Academic Performance

Previous studies have shown the relationship between personality traits and academic performance. For example, Lim & Melissa (2012) conducted a study with 360 secondary school students of Malaysia and investigated the roles of personality traits on academic performance. This study found significant and positive relationship between academic

performances. This is in harmony with the studies of previous researches conducted by various scholars for example: (Conrad & Patry, 2012; Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham, 2008; Nofle & Robbins, 2007). The studies further revealed how each trait of the FFM correlates with academic performance.

Openness to experience: The studies by Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham (2005), Farsides & Woodfield (2003), and Gray & Watson (2002) revealed positive association between openness and academic performance. Studies further pointed out that students scoring high in openness frequently tend to be motivated to learn as much as possible about an area of knowledge that they find attractive. They also have a propensity to reject the idea of studying for a test/exam for its own sake. On the other hand, many other studies did not find association between openness to experience and academic performance (Nofle & Robbins 2007; Hair & Hampson, 2006; and Diseth, 2003).

Conscientiousness: Many studies have found a positive association between conscientiousness and academic performance (Conrad & Patry, 2012; Wegerman & Funder, 2007; Conard, 2006; Bauer & Liang, 2003). The studies further reported that conscientiousness was the strongest predictor of academic performance than other forms of traits. It has also been found to predict narrower indicator of academic performance such as final scores of students (Lounsbury, Sundstrom, Loveland & Gibson, 2003; Paunonon & Ashton, 2001) The studies indicated that conscientiousness deals with determination to accomplish a task, stretched out in three categories: achievement orientation, dependability and orderliness.

Extraversion as a predictor of academic performance has produced mixed results. Many research findings revealed that extraversion negatively correlated with academic performance (Salgado & Táuriz, 2014; Hakimi, Hejazi, & Lavasani, 2011), whereas a study conducted on an American sample by Furnham, Moutafi, & Chamorro-Premuzic (2005) revealed a positive association with academic performance. This result is in agreement with the studies by Hair & Hampson (2006), Bauer & Liang (2003), and Furnham, et al. (2003). The studies stated further that extraversion is the capacity of a student to exercise positive emotions, assertiveness, loquaciousness, sociability and the propensity to look for stimulus in the company of other students.

Agreeableness has been found to be positively linked to academic performance in some studies (Conard, 2006; Hair & Graziano, 2003; Farsides & WoodField, 2003). However, Salgado & Táuriz (2012) and Nofle & Robins (2007) studies reported negative association between agreeableness and academic performance.

Neuroticism is a long-term predisposition to be in a negative emotional state (Rosander, Bäckström, & Stenberg, 2011). People with neuroticism tend to have more sad moods, anxiety, anger and vulnerability. Studies have found negative associations between neuroticism and academic performance (Clough, Oakes, Dagnall, Thompson, & Mcgeown, 2016; Rosander et al., 2011; Wagerman & Furnder, 2007). On the other hand, neuroticism was found in some studies to be positively related to academic performance (Busato, Prins, Elshout, & Hamaker, 2000). These studies indicated that neuroticism is a negative word associated to a student experiencing unpleasant emotions such as anger, persistent anxiety, hopelessness and defencelessness during or after academic tasks.

Personality Traits Due to Gender Differences and Academic Performance

The gender differences of the FFM personality traits have been studied together with academic performance (Vecchione, Alessandri, Barbaranell & Caprara, 2012 and Weisberg, DeYoung, & Hirsh, 2011). The result of their studies identified significant relationship between gender differences in the five factor model personality traits and academic performance. The result indicated that female students score higher in neuroticism, agreeableness and openness to experience. The study of Nguyen, Allen & Fraccastoro (2005), identified female students to obtain higher scores in agreeableness and conscientiousness. However, Khairul (2003) study indicates that there were no critical gender differences in agreeableness, extraversion, conscientiousness and openness to experience between male and female students.

In contrast, the study conducted by Chapman, Duberstein, Sorensen & Lyness (2007) indicates that female students had more agreeableness characteristic compared to male students. The result further revealed that female students had more neuroticism traits compared to male students. From the results of the above review literature, it seems gender differences in personality traits were inconsistent, thus more research is needed to explain these disparities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey research design was adopted in the study. The population of study comprised all secondary school two Students in Cross River State, Nigeria. The sample for the study comprised 796 Secondary School Two Students male and female with their ages ranging from 14 and 16.

Multi-stage sampling process was used to select the sample for this study. 9 local government areas out of the eighteen in Cross River State were selected comprising 3

from each educational zones with two public secondary schools each from urban and rural areas making a total number of 18 public secondary schools out of the 272 in the state. Using a sample size calculator, it was determined that the appropriate sample size for a finite population of 3,370 SS two students in the 18 public secondary schools randomly selected for the study at 95% confidence limit and 3.03 confidence interval is 796 sample size for the study. The researcher adapted the five factors model of personality traits comprising the International Personality Trait Items, developed by Goldberg (1999). The instrument has 5 subscales where each scale contains 10 items on a 4-point response of (4=SA, 3=A, 2=D, and 1=SD) for positive items while negative items are scored in a reverse order. The maximum obtainable score is 200 while the minimum is 50.

It also used the English Language Performance Test (ELAPT),#. This is a 50-item multiple choice standardised objective test, prepared by the researcher from SS II past question papers, covering different topics the students had been taught in class. A test blueprint or table of specification was used to establish its content validity. It was carefully planned to reflect and emphasise students' knowledge, comprehension, and application. Each correct response was assigned a score of two marks making a maximum obtainable score of 100 marks.

Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments

In validating ELAPT, items were drawn from the senior secondary two (SSII) English Language scheme, using a table of specification. This process helped the researcher to ensure that questions in the instrument were spread across all the topics in the syllabus. The table of specification helped to reduce what Kaplan and Saccuzzo described as construct underrepresentation. In other words, the table of specification helped content validity of the ELAPT by ensuring all the aspects of the topics that were taught and included in the test instrument were at the appropriate level of cognition.

Table 1: Table of specification for items in English Language Academic Performance Test (ELAT)

Content	Weight	Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Total
	%	22	34	44	100
Lexis & Structure	14	2	2	3	7
Synonyms	10	1	2	2	5
Antonyms	14	1	3	3	7
Idioms	10	1	1	3	5
Concord	18	2	3	4	9
Nominalization	12	1	2	3	6
Registers	22	3	4	4	11
Total	100	11	17	27	50

A pool of the items that constituted this instrument was subjected to item analysis and only items with high discriminating index and a difficulty index ranging from 0.2 and 0.8 with high discriminating power were included in the final test instrument.

In order to determine the reliability of the research instruments, a pilot study involving 62 students outside the main study area in Cross Rivers State were used. The test-retest method was employed at two weeks interval. The results obtained are presented in Table 2 having subjected the data to Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Statistical.

Table 2: Test-Retest Reliability Coefficient of Research Instruments (n=62)

Instrument	Test Position	Mean	Sd	r_{tt}
IPIP	1 st	62.68	3.68	0.64
	2 nd	69.55	4.85	
ELAPT	1 st	45.68	6.32	0.76
	2 nd	48.55	5.99	

It is evident from Table 2 that the reliability values are relatively large and suitable for the main study. For IPIP 0.64 and ELAPT, 0.76.

Method of Data Analysis

Data generated from the research instruments were computed statistically to show mean and standard deviations. Hypotheses: 1 and 2 were tested with Multiple Regression Analysis and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) respectively at 0.05 significant level.

RESULT

Hypothesis One: Personality traits will not have significant relationship between English Language academic performance among secondary school students' multiple regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis and the results was summarised in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3
Correlations between Students' English Language academic performance and their Personality Traits

Variables	ELAP.	OPN	CON	EXV	AGB	NEU
ELAP	1.00					
OPN	.21**	1.00				
CON	.19**	.29**	1.00			
EXV	.10	.15**	.17	1.00		
AGB	.06	.15	.16*	.00	1.00	
NRT	-.14**	-.07	.01	.21*	.18**	1.00

*P<.05, **P<.01

Table 3 presents the triangular correlation matrix for the criterion variable (Students' English Language Performance (ELAP) and the predictors - Five Factor Model *measures* of Personality Traits. Among the predictor variables, Openness to experience has the highest correlation with students' academic performance in English Language. This correlation is .21 and was statistically significant at .05 alpha level. Consequently, Openness to Experience was entered first into the multiple regression (i.e. Step1 or Model 1). The second variable that was considered for regression analysis was conscientiousness as it has the highest partial correlation with ELAP controlling for OPN. This partial correlation was statistically significant ($r=.142$) and since OPN's contribution to the model was still significant ($r=.163$) when CON was controlled, both OPN and CON were retained in the multiple regression and this constituted Model 2 (Step 2). Neuroticism was the third highest and significant correlation with ELAP ($R = -.14$). The negative correlation indicates that being high on neuroticism may result in poor English Language academic performance among secondary school students. Extraversion and Agreeableness have positive correlations ($R = .10$ and $R=.06$ respectively) with ELAP. These correlations are not statistically significant ($p > .05$) and as such Extraversion and Agreeableness were not entered into the regression analysis.

Table 4. Stepwise Multiple Regression of Personality Traits (significant measures only) in English Language academic performance.

Variable s	ELA P	OP N	CO N	NTS	B	SE B	R ²	R ² Adj	R ² Change	F	df ₁	df ₂	P
OPN	.21**	1.00			.69	.16	.04	.04	.044	36.	1	79	.00
CON	.19**	.29*	1.00		.77	.18	.06	.06	.019	26.	2	79	.00
NEU	-	.10*	.01	1.00	.54	.14	.07	.07	.016	22.	3	79	.00
Intercept	.14**	*			38.	2.9				6		2	1
Mean	49.77	11.9	11.6	10.8									
SD	12.93	2.94	2.53	3.04									

*P<.05, **P<.01

A stepwise multiple regressions was conducted to determine the extent ELAP (dependent variable) could be predicted from the five factor model measures of personality traits (independent variables). The null hypotheses tested were that the multiple R2 was equal to 0 and that the regression coefficients (the slopes) were equal to 0. Analysis was performed using IBM SPSS 25 REGRESSION AND EXPLORE for data screening (in case of missing) and evaluation of assumptions. There were no missing data. Furthermore, there were no significant concerns about the conformity of the data to assumptions of linearity, normality, homogeneity of variance, independence and multi co-linearity.

Table 6 displays the correlations between the significant variables (among the five factor variables), the un-standardized regression coefficient (B), its standard error (SEB) and intercept, R, R2. R2 adjusted, after entry of all the five independent variables. R was significantly different from zero at the end of each step from step1 to step 3. After step 3 with three variables entered (i.e., OPN, CON and NTS), the remaining two variables (Extraversion and Agreeableness) did not make additional statistically significant contributions to the variance in ELAP. Consequently, they were excluded from the multiple regressions. After step 3 with three independent variables in the equation (i.e., OPN, CON and NTS) R2 was 0.079 with 95% confidence limit from .048 to .682, F (3,

792) = 22.6, $P < .001$). The adjusted R^2 value of .079 indicates that at least 7% of the variance in ELAP is predicted by OPN, CON and NTS.

In the stepwise multiple regression OPN was entered first (step 1) and explained - about 4.4% of the variance in ELAP ($R^2 = .044$, $F(1, 794) = 36.5$, $P < .001$). CON was entered second and explained a further 1.9% of the variance in ELAP ($R^2 = .063$, R^2 change = .019, $F(2, 793) = 26.8$, $P < .001$). NTS was entered third and explained - another 1.6% of the variance in ELAP. ($R^2 = .079$, R^2 change = .016, $F(3, 792) = 22.6$, $P < .001$). EXV and AGB did not explain a significant increment in the proportion of variance explained and were excluded from the regression model.

Additionally, the finding revealed the following:

For OPN, the un--standardised partial slope ($B=0.69$) and the standardized partial slope ($\beta = 0.16$) were significantly different from 0 ($t = 4.31$, $df=794$, $p < .001$); with every one-point increase in OPN, ELAP will increase by approximately 1/100 of one point when controlling for CON and NTS. For CON, un-standardized partial slope ($B=.77$) and the standardised partial slope ($\beta = 0.15$) were significantly different from 0 ($t = 4.20$, $df = 794$, $p < .001$); with every one-point increase in CON. ELAP will increase by approximately 1/100 of one point when controlling for OPN and EXV. For NTS, the un-standardized partial slope ($B = -0.54$) and the standardized partial slope ($\beta = -0.13$) were significantly different from 0 ($t = -3.68$, $df = 794$, $p < .001$); with every one-point decrease in NTS, ELAP will increase by 1/100 of one point when controlling for OPN and CON.

The intercept (or average ELAP when OPN, CON and NTS is 0) was significantly different from 0 ($B_0 = 38.42$, $t = 13.06$, $p < .001$).

The multiple regression models can be written as:

$$ELAP = 38.42 + 0.69(OPN) + 0.77(CON) - 0.54(NTS)$$

The three- variable regression model indicates that greater English Language academic performance was associated with higher levels of some personality traits as measured, on one hand, by higher Openness to Experience and Conscientiousness and on the other hand by lower

Neuroticism.

Hypothesis Two: There will be no significant gender difference due to personality traits in English Language academic performance among secondary school students. Analysis of Covariance was used to test this hypothesis and the results are displayed in Tables 5, 6 and 7.

Table 5: Descriptive Data on English Language academic performance due to Gender and Personality Traits

Personality Trait	Gender	N	Mean	Sd
Openness	Male	135	54.33	9.83
	Female	140	50.84	10.28
	Total	275	52.56	10.19
Conscientiousness	Male	80	54.86	15.20
	Female	66	56.44	8.02
	Total	146	55.58	12.46
Extraversion	Male	51	46.84	15.37
	Female	35	44.06	13.50
	Total	86	45.71	14.62
Agreeableness	Male	62	45.29	13.04
	Female	52	50.35	11.02
	Total	114	47.60	12.37
Neuroticism	Male	95	44.57	13.17
	Female	80	43.25	13.83
	Total	175	43.97	13.45
Total	Male	423	50.01	13.66
	Female	373	49.50	12.05
	Total	796	49.77	12.93

The results presented in Table 5 show the mean and standard deviation of students' English Language academic performance disaggregates according to personality traits and gender. To determine if there will be a statistically significant difference in the dependent measure due to the personality traits and gender, ANCOVA was used to test the hypotheses and the results displayed in Table 6.

Table 6: Analysis of Covariance in gender differences in personality traits and English Language academic performance

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Squares	F
Corrected Model	16794.62	9	1866.07	12.64
Intercept	1619425.13	1	1619425.13	10969.05
Personality traits	15132.43	4	3783.11	25.62
Gender	6.22	1	6.22	0.04
Personality traits*Gender	1765.07	4	441.27	2.99
Error	116041.77	786	147.64	
Total	2104678	796		
Corrected Total	132836.39	795		

$F_{4, 786, 0.05} = 2.37$

The ANCOVA result presented in Table 6 shows no significant main effect of gender on the English Language academic performance of secondary school students ($F = 0.04$, $p > .05$). However, the main effect of personality traits on the students' academic performance in English Language was statistically significant as the calculated F-ratio of 25.62 is greater than the Table value of 2.37 given 4/786 degrees of freedom at the 5 percent probability level. Similarly, the relationship between personality traits and gender was significant since the calculated F-value of 2.99 was greater than F-critical value of 2.37 given 4 and 786 degrees of freedom at .05 significant level. Thus, hypothesis four was rejected and it was concluded that there were significant gender differences in the English Language academic performance of secondary school students due to their personality traits. To determine which pair-wise comparisons accounted for the significant difference, post-hoc comparisons using the Turkey procedure were performed and the outcome of the statistical analysis is shown in Table 7

Table 7: Multiple Comparisons for the Personality Traits

Personality Trait (i)	Personality Trait (j)	Mean Difference (i-j)	Sig
Openness	Conscientiousness	-3.06	0.01
	Extraversion	7.14	0.00
	Agreeableness	4.77	0.00
	Neuroticism	8.68	0.00
Conscientiousness	Openness	3.06	0.01
	Extraversion	10.2	0.00
	Agreeableness	7.83	0.00
	Neuroticism	11.74	0.00
Extraversion	Openness	-7.14	0.00
	Conscientiousness	-10.2	0.00
	Agreeableness	-2.37	0.18
	Neuroticism	1.54	0.34
Agreeableness	Openness	-4.77	0.00
	Conscientiousness	-7.83	0.00
	Extraversion	2.37	0.18
	Neuroticism	3.91	0.01
Neuroticism	Openness	-8.68	0.00
	Conscientiousness	-11.74	0.00
	Extraversion	-1.54	0.34
	Agreeableness	-3.91	0.01

Table 7 highlights that there was significant difference between openness when compared with conscientiousness (-3.06, $p < 0.05$), extraversion (7.14, $p < 0.05$), agreeableness (4.77, $p < 0.05$) and neuroticism (8.68, $p < 0.05$). Further evidence from Table 13 shows no significant difference between extraversion when compared with agreeableness (-2.37, $p > 0.05$) and neuroticism (1.54, $p > 0.05$). In summary, all the pair-wise comparisons were statistically significant except two: Extraversion and each of Agreeableness and Neuroticism.

Discussion of the Findings:

Hypothesis One: This hypothesis states that personality traits will not have significant relationship between English Language academic performances among secondary school students. The finding of this study revealed that personality traits correlate with English

Language academic performance among secondary school students. This in agreement with the studies by Lim & Melissa (2012), Conrad & Patry (2012), Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham (2008), and Nofle & Robbins (2007). The result of their studies indicated personality traits correlate with academic performance.

The finding further pointed out that openness to experience and conscientiousness positively relate with students' academic performance and that neuroticism negatively contributes to academic performance. Extraversion and agreeableness were found to be unrelated to academic performance. This finding was supported with the studies by Conrad & Patry (2012), Wegerman & Funder (2007), Conard (2006), Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham (2005), Farsides & Woodfield (2003), and Gray & Watson (2002). The result of their studies identified openness and conscientiousness as the highest contributors to academic performance. The finding contradicted with results of Nofle & Robbins (2007), Hair & Hampson (2006) and Diseth (2003). The result of their studies did not find association between openness to experience and academic performance.

The finding further indicated negative associations between neuroticism and English Language academic performance. This finding is in alignment with the study by Clough et al., (2016), Rosander et al. (2011), and Wagerman & Funder (2007), but in disagreement with the study by Busato et al. (2000).

In the study, openness to experience and conscientiousness were found to be positively related to academic performance; this is attributed to the fact that students who score high in openness to experience are usually imaginative, curious, aesthetically sensitive, independent-minded and divergent in thinking. Also, the major positive relationship between conscientiousness could be explicated from the fact that conscientious students are well-known to be hardworking, well organised and ambitious in nature.

Hypothesis Two: There will be no significant gender-based difference due to personality traits in English Language academic performance among secondary school students. The findings established that there is significant gender-based difference due to personality traits and English Language academic performance among secondary school students. This finding is in agreement with the study of Nguyen et al. (2005) and in line with the studies of Vecchione et al. (2012) & Weisberg et al. (2011) whose results revealed that gender personality traits influence academic performance. The finding is in disharmony with the study of Khairul (2003) who indicates that there was no gender-based difference in personality traits and academic performance.

Gender differences in personality traits are often characterised in terms of which gender has higher scores on that trait. On this ground, the finding of this study revealed that female students scored higher in conscientiousness and agreeableness traits whereas, their male counterparts scored higher in openness to experience, extroversion and neuroticism traits. This contradicts the study of Costa et al. (2001). The results of his study identified female students to acquire higher scores in neuroticism, agreeableness and openness to experience. However, the finding is in agreement with the study of Chapman et al. (2007) who identified that female students scored more in agreeableness characteristic compare to male students. The finding also is in harmony with the study conducted by Nguyen et al. (2005) who found that female students scored higher in agreeableness and conscientiousness than male counterparts. This gender differences do not imply that male and female experience states on divergent ends of the trait range, on contrary, but significant difference can exist or overlap between the distribution of male and female students.

Conclusion:

Based on the findings of the study, it can be said that among the Five factor Model personality traits: openness to experience, conscientiousness and low in neuroticism positively correlates English Language academic performance.

Also, there was a relationship between gender differences due to personality traits and English Language performance with the males high in openness to experience, extraversion, neuroticism, and the females high in conscientiousness and agreeableness.

Recommendations

The present study investigates the relationship between personality traits and English Language academic performance among secondary school students. In view of the conclusion the following suggestions become imperative.

1. The study recommends that among the five factors of the personality traits, higher level of openness to experience, conscientiousness and lower level of neuroticism should be encouraged among students. Likewise, students with higher level neurotic tendencies should be assisted through psychotherapy interventions.
2. Males and females students differ in their personal values and they process information in different ways; their personality traits are different and so is their understanding. It is therefore recommended for curriculum planners to inculcate methods of identifying gender personality traits, in secondary schools' curriculum

development, since males and females are prone to certain types of personality traits for their academic success

Implication for Findings

The findings of this study have very important implications for Nigerian stakeholders in education.

The identification of openness to experience, conscientiousness and neuroticism among the five factors model of personality traits is on the one hand and in another hand gender differences in personality traits (with the males preferring openness to experience while female conscientiousness) all facilitate English Language academic performance. The implication of this finding will guide educators and secondary school's curriculum planners to recognise personality traits as psychological factors that promote students' academic success. It is therefore important for the teachers to assist the students in making the best choice out of these identified psychological factors for improvement of academic success.

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