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Influence Of Personality Traits On Students' Academic Achievement In Secondary Schools In Harari, Eastern Ethiopia

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Abstract

Keywords:

*academic
achievement;
personality traits;
secondary schools*

This study investigated the influence of personality traits on the academic achievement of the Secondary School at Harari, Eastern Ethiopia. This study used the explanatory sequential mixed method design using a standardized instrument as a primary data-gathering tool. The study's respondents were students from four secondary schools in Harari State (N = 347), who were selected using the stratified random sampling technique. The study found that Conscientiousness ($r=0.46$, $p<0.05$) was significantly positively related to academic achievement, whereas Neuroticism ($r=-0.39$, $p<0.05$) was significantly negatively related to academic achievement. Results from regression analysis showed that Conscientiousness was the strongest predictor of academic achievement. In conclusion, personality traits significantly affect students' academic achievement. This study suggests that teachers, parents, and students should be educated on the knowledge that personality traits play a major role in academic activities and performance.

	Abstrak
Kata kunci: prestasi akademik; trait kepribadian; sekolah menengah	Penelitian ini menelaah pengaruh kepribadian terhadap prestasi akademik siswa di sekolah menengah di Negara Bagian Harari, Ethiopia Timur. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain metode campuran sekuensial eksplanatori dengan menggunakan instrumen terstandarisasi sebagai alat pengumpul data utama. Responden penelitian ini adalah siswa dari empat sekolah menengah di Harari (N=347) yang dipilih dengan menggunakan teknik pengambilan sampel acak bertingkat. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa Conscientiousness ($r=0,46$; $p<0,05$) memiliki hubungan positif dan signifikan dengan prestasi akademik, sedangkan Neuroticism ($r=-0,39$; $p<0,05$) memiliki hubungan signifikan dan negatif dengan prestasi akademik. Hasil dari analisis regresi menunjukkan bahwa Conscientiousness merupakan prediktor individu yang paling kuat untuk prestasi akademik. Kesimpulannya, sifat-sifat kepribadian secara signifikan memengaruhi prestasi akademik siswa. Disarankan agar para guru, orang tua, dan siswa diedukasi tentang pengetahuan bahwa sifat kepribadian memainkan peran utama dalam kegiatan akademik prestasi di sekolah.

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INTRODUCTION

Background Of The Study

Academic achievement is the general term that expresses the standard and quantity of a student's work, which suggests that it is directly associated with human growth, e.g., cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development (Shaka, 2020). It is a major issue among students, teachers, parents, school administrators, and the community at large. Attempts have been made by researchers to unravel the complexities surrounding this topic, including efforts to reason why disparities in academic achievement exist. Plenty of attention has been paid to external factors, such as type of school, teaching methods, school location, instructional materials, teachers' experience, et cetera (West African Examinations Council [WAEC], 2005). According

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WAEC (Ossai, 2012), psychologists have attempted to identify the major predictors of individual academic performance. Factors like intelligence, self-concept, gender, study habits, maturation, and home background, among others, have been extensively explored in relation to academic performance (Hussain, Shahzadi, Saleem, & Ahmad, 2023).

Other factors that have been researched include child-rearing patterns, peer influence, socioeconomic background, and learning environment. Traits theorists have tried to identify the major traits that characterize personality. Notable among these are Sigmund Freud in the early 1900s, Gordon Allport (1937, 1961), Cattell (1967), Hans & Eysenck (1985), McCrae & Costa (1987), and a host of others. Over the years, psychologists have defined personality in many ways.

According to Abubakar, Yahaya, & Ibrahim (2023), personality is the comprehensive characteristics that differentiate people, or the consistency of individual behavior across different situations. Traits on the other hand are "enduring dimensions of personality characteristics which differentiate people from one another" (Eyong, David, & Umoh, 2014). Traits are therefore the total of stable characteristics in a person across different times and situations, which make the individual unique or distinct from others. These traits, popularly known as the 'Big Five' include openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (OCEAN). These personality traits influence academic achievement in secondary school students, either positively or negatively (Abubakar, Yahaya, & Ibrahim, 2023).

Empirically, Costa & McCrae (2009) found that Openness links to high scores on open-mindedness, originality, intellect, fantasy, values, actions, and aesthetics. It has been linked to low scores on practicality, conventionalism, preference for routine, change avoidance, and traditional thinking. Conscientiousness is characterized by a high score on orderliness, responsibility, and dependability. Highly conscientious people tend to exhibit low scores on organization, structure, impulse, and carelessness. Meanwhile, high scores on activity, talkativeness, assertiveness, sociability, warmth, and energy characterize Extraversion. Extraverts tend to showcase low scores on quietness, reservation, and withdrawal. Agreeableness is characterized by high scores on good-naturedness, cooperativeness, affection, flexibility, forgiveness, soft heart, and trust. They also have a low score on the critical, uncooperative, suspicious, and, less forgiveness mistake. Finally, high scores on nerves, negative affect, hostility, anxiety,

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and depression characterize Neuroticism. This trait has also been linked to low scores on calmness in stressful situations, even temper, sense of security, stable mood, and optimism (Costa & McCrae, 2009).

Zhao, Su, & Yang (2023) said that gender is a variable that moderates academic outcomes and dimensions of personality across different academic settings. Although there has been extensive research on the five-factor model of personality across genders, the results are mixed. Therefore, the interaction between these five factors, gender, and academic performance is likely to showcase interesting outcomes. While Filipiak & Łubianka (2024) regarded gender differences as unimportant, other researchers like Zhao, Su, & Yang (2023) found gender differences in big personality traits. This contradiction increases the urgency to examine what influence these personality traits have on the academic performance of students.

Research Gap

The majority of the studies on the correlation between personality traits and academic achievement were done outside and inside of Ethiopia. These studies were at university, college, and elementary school levels. However, only a few studies focused on secondary school students. In addition, previous studies presented methodological gaps and the results were inconsistent and inconclusive. Therefore, this study used an explanatory sequential mixed method design to find out the correlation between personality traits and academic achievement. The researcher also tried to explain the influence of personality traits on students' academic achievement. This research work would fill the gap by critically exploring the influence of personality traits on students' academic achievement in secondary schools in the Harari Region.

Statement Of The Problem

Underachievement in the secondary school educational system has been a major concern. Studies on the variation of Big Five personality traits in students remain limited. In addition, empirical evidence has shown that personality traits were significantly associated with academic achievement (Chamorro-Premuzic & Furham, 2003). According to Bekele (2013), several factors can influence the academic achievement of secondary school students some of them are personality traits. Given this, there has been a general argument among psychologists that low performance at school cannot completely be attributed to poor instructional methods of teachers and lack of teaching and learning materials, but also to other factors, including students' personality traits

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(Shaka, 2020). Studies have presented mixed results regarding the influence of personality traits on academic achievement (Bekele, 2013).

Research Questions

Based on these research problems, the following research questions were formulated: 1) Is there a significant gender difference in personality traits of secondary school students in Harari? 2) Is there a significant relationship between personality traits and academic achievement of secondary school students in Harari? 3) To what extent do personality traits predict students' academic achievement in secondary school in Harari?

Purposes Of The Study

The main purpose of this study was: 1) To identify gender differences in personality traits of secondary school students in the Harari Region; 2) To describe the relationship between personality traits and academic achievement of secondary school students in Harari; 3) To predict the influence of personality traits on students' academic achievement in secondary Schools in Harari.

Hypothesis Of The Study

There are two alternative hypotheses and two null hypotheses of this study, namely: 1) H_{a1} : There is significant gender difference in personality traits of secondary school students in Harari; 2) H_{a2} : There is a significant influence of personality traits on academic achievement in secondary school students in Harari; 3) H_{01} : There is no significant gender difference in personality traits of secondary school students in Harari; 4) H_{02} : There is no significant influence of personality traits on academic achievement in secondary school students in Harari.

Rationale Of The Study

This study will educate the stakeholders in the education sector on how the individual personality traits of students influence academic achievement. It will also enlighten them on different types of personality traits and how each specific trait can influence academic achievement. This research provides a contribution to the body of literature about the influence of personality traits on students' academic achievement.

Novelty Of The Study

The researchers conducted a literature review to understand and comprehend the link between personality and academic success. The literature review process discovered several findings.

Farsides & Woodfield (2003) assessed the role of the big five personality traits in predicting academic success. Only two traits yielded significant correlations with eventual undergraduate success, with both Openness to experience and Agreeableness being positively associated with final grades. Openness to experience had a direct impact on final grades. However, the impact of Agreeableness was wholly mediated by absenteeism (not missing lectures and seminars). In another study, the relations between the Big Five personality dimensions and post-secondary academic achievement was examined, and some consistent results were found. This meta-analysis showed Conscientiousness to be strongly and consistently associated with academic success. In addition, Openness to experience is positively linked to scholastic achievement, whereas Extraversion is negatively related to scholastic achievement. Based on the study, personality traits can account for variance in academic performance beyond the measures of cognitive ability (O'Connor & Paunonen, 2007).

Academic achievement was found to have a significant correlation with Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness to Experience. Nofle & Robins (2007) found that Big Five personality traits, especially Conscientiousness, predict academic achievement, including grades and standardized test scores. Openness was proven to be the strongest predictor of verbal scores, whereas Conscientiousness strongly predicts grades in high school and college (Nofle & Robins, 2007). Poropat (2009) also discovered that Conscientiousness is significantly correlated with academic achievement.

When tested, the correlation between Conscientiousness and academic performance is largely independent of intelligence Poropat (2009). In a different study, a group of researchers confirmed that personality and learning styles simultaneously play a significant role in influencing academic achievement (Komarraju, Karau, Schmeck, & Avdic, 2011). A sample of 308 undergraduate students completed the Five Factor Inventory and the Inventory of Learning Processes and reported their grade point average (GPA). Two of the Big Five traits, conscientiousness, and agreeableness were found to be positively related to all four learning styles (synthesis analysis, methodical study, fact retention, and elaborative processing), whereas Neuroticism was negatively related to all four learning styles. This suggests that both personality traits and learning styles contribute to academic performance (Komarraju, Karau, Schmeck, & Avdic, 2011).

Another study examined the relationships between personality traits and academic achievement among students (Hakimi, Hejazi, & Lavasani, 2011). A sample

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that consisted of 285 students was given the NEO Big Five Personality Factors inventory and asked to report their GPA. The data analysis revealed that personality traits are significantly related to academic achievement. Results also showed Conscientiousness to be the most important predictor (Hakimi, Hejazi, & Lavasani, 2011).

Another research also shows Conscientiousness to be the sole predictor of academic success. Extraversion is positively correlated with academic performance (yet the correlation is weak and insignificant). Meanwhile, Agreeability and Neuroticism have negative correlations with academic performance (Buju, 2013). However, research proves that Conscientiousness is not important for academic success. Neuroticism, Introversion, Agreeableness, and Openness to experience have observable ties to academic performance, but Conscientiousness is relatively unimportant for success (Nye, Orel, & Kochergina, 2013; Novikova & Vorobyeva, 2017).

In an attempt to understand whether students' personality and mental abilities influence their academic performance, a preliminary study was conducted on 121 undergraduate students. It was found that the personality traits regardless of their academic achievement are similar, except for assertiveness. In addition, a significant relationship between personality traits and cognitive abilities was only found in low achievers (Khan, 2018). Personality plays a significant role in influencing students' academic achievement. A study explored the correlation between the Big Five personality traits and students' academic achievement, which was measured by GPA. This study was conducted by reviewing the recent empirical literature on the correlation between the Big Five personality traits and GPA. This meta-analysis indicated that Conscientiousness has a higher correlation to GPA than other dimensions (Ibrahim, Yusof, Razzak, & Norshahidi, 2014; Mammadov, 2022; Trapmann, Hell, Hirn, & Schuler, 2007)..

A study investigated the influence of personality traits on the academic achievements of secondary school students in Cross River State. The study involved a sample of 8,530 students from twenty schools. A significant difference was found between the achievements of students with high levels of Conscientiousness and Agreeableness, and those with low levels of the traits (Eyong, David, & Umoh, 2014).

Then, a different study was conducted to determine various personality traits and their correlation with their academic performance so that the students can modify their learning methods to produce excellent academic achievements by understanding their

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pattern of personality. A sample of 416 medical students was studied. The 'Conscientious Personality' trait showed a positive significant association with GPA. However, no significant association was observed between other personality traits (Openness, Extraversion, Agreeable, and Neuroticism) and GPA. There was also no significant association between personality traits and other characteristics of respondents, i.e., gender, marital status, and teaching methods (Al-Naim et al., 2016).

Then, another study examined the influence of Big Five Personality on achievement motivation and academic performance among sojourn students (Neesha, Minal, Kirtana, & Varun, 2017). The participants were 57 sojourn students aged 17 to 22 years old. Participants were asked to fill up the Neo Five-Factor Inventory and Stanford Achievement Test and report their GPA. The results proved that there was no significant correlation between the Big Five personality traits, achievement motivation, and academic performance. The findings of the study are intriguing because of the contradiction with previous studies about the relationship between personality, achievement motivation, and academic performance, and what cultural factors are influencing the relationship. The majority of previous research focused on the correlation between personality traits and academic achievement, but this research focused on the influence of personality traits on academic achievement in secondary school students.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a mixed-method research design, specifically an explanatory sequential mixed-method design. This design is perhaps the most popular form of mixed methods design in educational research. In an explanatory sequential mixed method design (also called a two-phase model; Creswell & Creswell, 2017), the researcher first collects quantitative data and then qualitative data to help explain or elaborate on the quantitative data. The reason behind employing a mixed research design was for triangulation, that is to substantiate the quantitative data with the information gained from the qualitative ones.

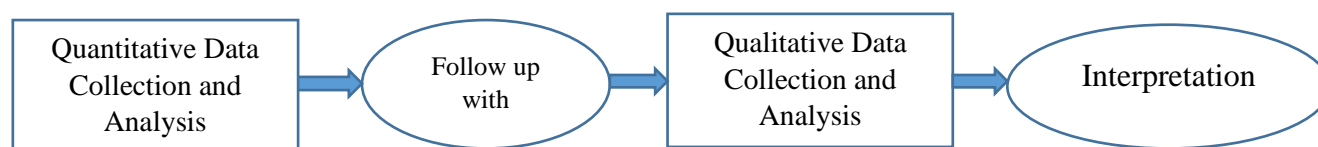


Figure 1. Research Procedures

Research Sample and Sampling Technique

The population of this study was students of four selected secondary schools in the Harari Region. Students were chosen using a stratified random sampling technique because there were also variations in population sizes of different strata (sex, grade, and school). The total students of in these four secondary schools were 3,503. The number of samples obtained from this population was 347 (male = 177, female = 170). The sample size of this study was determined using [Yamane's \(1967\)](#) formula with a 95% confidence level.

$$n = \frac{N_i}{1 + N_i(e)^2}$$

n = sample size required

N = number of people in the population

e = allowable error (%)

I = (1, 2, 3 ... i)

$$n = \frac{3503}{1 + 3503(0.05)^2} = \frac{3503}{1 + 3503(0.0025)} = \frac{3503}{10.09} = 347$$

Instruments Of Measurement

Data was collected via self-administered questionnaires, interviews, and document reviews. Questionnaires as a research instrument were developed and administered to students. The questionnaire was adapted from a 44-item self-report inventory, developed by [John, Donahue, & Kentle \(1991\)](#), which comprised adjectives related to the Five Factor Model domains. The questionnaire was designed in a way that allows participants to indicate their personality trait preferences on a five-point scale: (5) strongly agree, (4) agree, (3) undecided, (2) disagree, and (1) strongly disagree.

Table 1.
Reliability Test for Personality Traits

No	Variables	Number of items	Cronbach's α
1	Openness	10	0.75
2	Conscientiousness	9	0.78
3	Extraversion	8	0.73
4	Agreeableness	8	0.76
5	Neuroticism	9	0.73
	Overall reliability	44	0.75

As shown in Table 1, the reliability test for each personality trait using Cronbach's α showed satisfying results (Openness = 0.75, Conscientiousness = 0.78, Extraversion = 0.73, Agreeableness = 0.76, and Neuroticism = 0.78). The overall reliability test result of personality traits was 0.75, which was considered acceptable. The interview enabled a greater depth of response that is not possible through any other means. Thus, the purpose of the interview was to collect more supplementary opinions to substantiate and triangulate the questionnaire response. The researcher used the first-semester GPA of the students to enrich the research data.

Data Analysis Technique

The collected data was checked for completeness and cleaned before entry into a computer. Then, the questionnaires were coded and entered into Epi data version 3.1 by a data clerk. The data was then exported to the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23 for further data cleaning and analysis. The methods of data analysis were descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics, e.g., frequency, percentages, means, and standard deviation, were used to summarize the demographic variables of the respondents in relation to the students' personality traits. Inferential statistics, like independent t-test, bivariate correlation, and stepwise multiple regression were used to show the degree of strength or relationship, associations among the variables, and average relationship to predict or estimate the foremost possible value of those variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Research Results

Table 2.
Participant Demographics (N = 347)

Demographic Variable		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	177	51.00
	Female	170	49.00
	Total	347	100.00
Grade	9	71	20.50
	10	91	26.20
	11	99	28.50
	12	86	24.80
	Total	347	100.00

Table 2 shows that 177 (51%) of the respondents were male whereas 170 (49%) of them were female. On the other hand, from the grade level of participants, the majority 99 (28.5%) of the respondents were from grade 11; 91(26.2%) were from grade 10; 86 (24.8%) of them were from grade 12, whereas 71 (20.5%) of them were from grade 9.

Table 3.
Personality Traits And Academic Achievement Of Participants (N=347)

No	Variables	Mean	SD
1	Openness to experience	3.56	0.38
2	Conscientiousness	4.16	0.36
3	Extraversion	3.21	0.35
4	Agreeableness	3.22	0.36
5	Neuroticism	2.78	0.55
6	Academic achievement	69.71	12.37

Table 3 shows the mean for each variable being studied: Openness to experience = 3.56 (SD = 0.38), Conscientiousness = 4.16 (SD = 0.36), Extraversion = 3.21 (SD = 0.35), Agreeableness = 3.22 (SD = 0.36), Neuroticism = 2.78 (SD = 0.55), and academic achievement = 69.71 (SD = 12.37).

Table 4.
Personality Traits Based On Gender (N= 347)

Variable	Sex	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Openness	Male	3.55	0.40	0.03
	Female	3.56	0.36	0.05
Conscientiousness	Male	4.19	0.38	0.03
	Female	4.15	0.33	0.04

Variable	Sex	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Extraversion	Male	3.21	0.37	0.03
	Female	3.21	0.35	0.03
Agreeableness	Male	3.10	0.38	0.03
	Female	3.13	0.34	0.03
Neuroticism	Male	2.77	0.58	0.05
	Female	2.83	0.53	0.04

Table 4 showcases the mean difference between males and females in personality traits and learning styles. Female students showed higher mean scores in Openness to experience, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism than male students. Meanwhile, male students showed higher mean scores in Conscientiousness. The mean scores in Extraversion for both genders were similar.

Table 5.

Independent T-Test For Personality Traits Based On Gender (N = 347)

Variables	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				t-test for Equality of Means				
	F	p	T	df	p (2-tailed)	Md	Std. Error Difference	95% CID	
								Lower	Upper
Openness	1.46	0.23	-0.39	345	0.69	-0.01	0.04	-0.10	0.07
Conscientiousness	5.21	0.024	0.58	345	0.57	0.04	0.03	-0.06	0.10
Extraversion	0.15	0.71	-0.04	345	0.97	0.00	0.04	-0.08	0.08
Agreeableness	2.68	0.11	-0.78	345	0.44	-0.02	0.10	-0.11	0.05
Neuroticism	3.12	0.08	0.31	345	0.75	-0.06	0.06	-0.10	0.14

Table 5 indicated no significant mean difference between male and female students in personality trait dimensions ($p > 0.05$) and learning styles ($p > 0.05$). Levene's test for equality variances showed that there were male and female equal assumed variances in personality traits of secondary school students at a 95% confidence interval of difference $p > 0.05$, two-tailed.

Table 6.

Correlation Between GPA and Personality Traits (N= 347)

No	Variable	GPA	Openness	Conscientiousness	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Neuroticism
1	GPA	1	0.33**	0.46**	-0.14	0.27**	-0.39**
2	Openness		1	0.43**	0.23**	0.31**	-0.30**
3	Conscientiousness			1	0.31**	0.39**	-0.318**
4	Extraversion				1	0.27**	-0.25**
5	Agreeableness					1	-0.49**
6	Neuroticism						1

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No	Variable	GPA	Openness	Conscientiousness	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Neuroticism
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)							

The correlation analysis in Table 6 indicated significant relationships among academic achievement, Openness, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism. Academic achievement had a significant positive relationship with Openness to experience ($r(347) = 0.33, p < 0.05$), Conscientiousness ($r(347) = 0.46, p < 0.05$), and Agreeableness ($r(347) = 0.27, p < 0.05$), and a significant negative correlation with Neuroticism ($r(347) = -0.39, p < 0.05$). Meanwhile, academic achievement had a negative and insignificant correlation with extraversion ($r(347) = -0.14, p > 0.05$).

Openness to experience was positively correlated with Conscientiousness ($r(347) = 0.43, p < 0.05$). Furthermore, it showed significant correlations with extraversion ($r(347) = 0.23, p < 0.05$) and agreeableness ($r(347) = 0.31, p < 0.05$), while neuroticism had a negative significant correlation with Openness to experience ($r(347) = -0.32, p < 0.05$). Conscientiousness is positively correlated with agreeableness ($r(347) = 0.39, p < 0.05$), indicating that an agreeable personality contributes to good academic achievement. Thus, Agreeableness and Openness to experience were seen as traits that contributed to academic success, and those who exhibited low scores on these traits were more likely to show lower educational achievement. Extraversion was negatively correlated with Neuroticism ($r(347) = -0.25, p < 0.05$), and Agreeableness is negatively significantly correlated with Neuroticism ($r(347) = -0.49, p < 0.05$).

Table 7.

Regression Analysis of Academic Achievement and Personality Traits (N = 347)

Model			USC		SC		t	p
	R	R ²	B	Std. Error	Beta			
	0.83	0.69						
1. Constant			1.445	0.09			17.06	0.000
Openness			0.33	0.16	0.17		2.11	0.020
Conscientiousness			0.47	0.17	0.18		2.25	0.001
Neuroticism			-0.29	0.10	-0.16		-2.06	0.031

a. Dependent Variable: GPA

b. Predictors: (Constant), Neuroticism, Openness, Conscientiousness,

As shown in Table 7, there was a significant relationship between academic achievement and personality traits. The R² value of 0.69 implied that personality traits jointly contributed 69% to students' academic achievement, with the remaining 31%

attributed to variables not studied in the present research. Data analyses showed us that in a regression equation, only three traits were found to contribute significantly toward academic achievement: Openness (X1), Conscientiousness (X2), and Neuroticism (X3). The strongest predictor in the model is Conscientiousness ($\beta = 0.47$, $t(347) = 2.25$, $p < 0.05$).

Discussion

The first objective of this study was to examine gender differences in personality traits of secondary school students. There was no significant gender difference in personality traits. This finding aligns with [Hakimi, Hejazi, & Lavasani \(2011\)](#) who found no statistically significant difference between secondary school male and female students when it comes to personality traits. However, [Zhao, Su, & Yang \(2023\)](#) discovered that gender was a variable that moderated the relationship between academic outcomes and dimensions of personality across different academic settings. However, the results of research on gender differences in personality factors are contradictory. For instance, [Filipiak & Lubianka \(2024\)](#) said gender differences were unimportant in big personality traits.

The second objective of this study was to understand the relationship between personality traits and academic achievement in secondary school students. Openness, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism were found to influence students' academic achievement. The study showed a relationship between medical students' personal qualities and academic success ([Hayat, Shateri, Amini, & Shokrpour, 2020](#)). In this case, Conscientiousness and Openness played a crucial role in supporting academic performance. However, Conscientiousness emerged as the strongest indicator of academic accomplishment. This trait is related to goal-setting, consistency, organizational skills in the classroom, and effort management. These characteristics drive students to attain academic success. Furthermore, these traits enable students to stay competitive and maintain good relationships with peers, which is also crucial in an educational environment.

This finding was consistent with previous studies, such as [Wagerman & Funder \(2007\)](#), [Ackerman, Chamorro-Premuzic, & Furnham \(2011\)](#), and [Bratko, Chamorro-Premuzic, & Saks \(2006\)](#), which found that Conscientiousness was the most reliable predictor of academic performance. Conscientious people are highly responsible,

achievement-oriented, and industrious. Conscientious learners are believed to be responsible for their academic tasks and strive to improve performance.

The last objective of this study was to predict the influence of personality traits on students' academic achievement in secondary schools. There was a statistically significant relationship between academic achievement and personality traits. [Costa & McCrae \(2009\)](#) highlighting the role of Conscientiousness as a domain-general trait that predicted conscientious behavior across various achievement-related situations. This is one personality trait that speaks volumes about people's integrity and it is heartening to statistically prove that such students will be good academic performers.

Conscientious individuals have often been described as methodical, organized, persistent, and focused on their goals. Then, according to [Dunsmore \(2006\)](#), Agreeableness is related to the attitude of people when interacting with others. Another study concluded that extraversion was linked to lower academic achievement at higher educational levels, especially at college or university; probably due to less emphasis on social relations and more on competition at higher education levels ([Komarraju, Karau, Schmeck, & Avdic, 2011](#)). Individuals who show high extraversion tend to be friendly, trustworthy, and cooperative.

Furthermore, [Chamorro-Premuzic & Furham \(2003\)](#) and [Furnham, Nuygards, & Chamorro-Premuzic \(2013\)](#) found that neuroticism was linked to higher absenteeism. This can impede learners' path toward actualizing their academic potential. Thus, conscientiousness is a strong predictor of academic achievement in secondary school.

The study had some limitations that should be considered. Firstly, the scope of the study was limited to the influence of personality traits on students' academic achievement. Secondly, the study was conducted exclusively in select secondary schools in Harari. Therefore, the findings of the study cannot be generalized to other locations. Finally, this study focuses on secondary school students, so there might be a possibility that the outcome of the study could be different for higher education students.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

The finding shows that there is a significant relationship between personality traits and academic achievement. This finding shows that Conscientiousness, Openness to experience, and Agreeableness were positively related to academic achievement, while

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Neuroticism had a negative correlation with school achievement. Students with a high neuroticism trait tend to underperform at school and have low emotional stability, a trait that was significantly correlated with the academic achievements of students. The findings of this study revealed that Conscientiousness was the most important predictor of academic achievement.

Suggestions

The study examined the influence of personality traits on students' academic achievement. Based on personality traits, the results suggested that students are very creative, focused on tackling new challenges, pay attention to detail, like to be the center of attention, enjoy meeting new people, and have concerns and empathy for others. Those who have high conscientiousness tend to produce better results in academics. This suggests that the students were still in the process of developing themselves as manifested in the results of their personality traits towards their academic achievement. Likewise, the researcher suggests that schools should create a program to strengthen and mold the students' personalities toward achieving their education goals. The purpose of such a program is to make the students aware of their personalities and make changes in their behavior. Furthermore, it will help students maximize their learning experience and promote better and more active performance in class. Teachers and parents who are aware of the personality traits of the students can provide the needed support and guidance to the children as they get to know themselves.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Moti Gelata Sakata: Conceptualization; Data Curation; Formal Analysis; Investigation; Methodology; Resources; Validation; Writing Original Draft; Writing, Review, & Editing.

Gemechu Abera Gobena: Investigation; Project Administration; Validation; Writing, Review & Editing; Comment On The Draft; Follow Up.

Geleta Sitota Dilgasa: Investigation; Project Administration; Validation; Writing, Review & Editing; Comment On The Draft; Giving Suggestions.

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