

# Conscientiousness And Agreeableness Traits And Academic Achievement Of Senior Secondary School

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**Abstract:** *This study examined the influence of personality traits on academic achievement of senior secondary school students in English language in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. To achieve the purpose of this study, two research questions and hypotheses were formulated and tested. Related literature was reviewed according to the variables of the study. Ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. Population of the study was 7,123 which constitute a sample of 712 secondary school students in Public Schools in Calabar Education Zone, were randomly selected for the study. The selection was done through the stratified random sampling technique. Two instruments, the Students personality questionnaire (SPQ) and English Language achievement test (ELAT) of 2016 Mock Examinations were adapted and used for data collection. The data collected were analyzed using the independent t-test analysis. All hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance. The research findings showed that personality traits (conscientiousness and agreeableness) significantly influenced students' academic achievement in English Language in secondary schools in Calabar Education Zone. In view of these findings, it was recommended that teachers and guidance counselors should understand that individual differences exist as a result of personality traits. Therefore, in providing teaching experience or services, care should be taken to accommodate every individual's uniqueness.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

There is growing concern nationwide on the reasons why the academic achievement of students does not commensurate with the huge investment of government in the education sector. With the level of importance attached to education, as the bedrock of the nation, it is expected that the performance of our students should compete favourably globally. The release of results of public schools is often followed by public outcry about the poor performance of students. United Nation Development Project (2005) described this as "systematic ineffectiveness" and blamed it largely on the fact that schools are not effective.

Education according to National Policy of Education (FRN,2004) is a tool for distinction in moving national advancement. The academic prowess of children, adolescent and even adults determines the quality and quantity of manpower that will be available for the much desired breakthrough of Nigeria in science, technology, art, entertainment, and so on. Education provides the human

capital that will initiate, plan, direct and execute the development processes and activities that are critical for economic growth and development of a nation, (Nwogu, 2006).

Bamgbose (2005) sees English language in Nigeria as one of the legacies of colonial administration, which has succeeded in eliminating the problems of multiple languages in Nigeria. English language has played a major role in Nigeria; evident in our education, government, business, commerce, mass media and all areas of the society. It serves as a medium of communication among the different ethnic groups and eliminates linguistic barriers which has made it a Lingua franca in Nigeria and by so doing, it brings about political unity. This role was stipulated in the 2004 National Language Policy on Education, which states that "English shall be the medium of instruction in the upper primary, secondary and tertiary level of education."

The status of English language is enhanced as it is not only a course of study in school but also the language of the first few years of primary up to tertiary education. Again, the

National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) stipulates the value of English language as one of the core subjects that will enable a student to offer any course in higher institution. Moreover, it is seen as a language of communication in examinations.

However, in spite of the importance placed on English language and the role it plays in education, the performance of students over the years has been on a down ward trend. Media reports show that there have been wrong uses of vocabulary in communication. Hence, the poor performance in English language in Cross River State which has become a matter of great interest to researchers, teachers and school administrators.

Of all the core subjects offered in the secondary schools, English Language performance has been below average since 2014 to 2016. The statistics of result of secondary school students' performance in English Language from West Africa Examination Council (WAEC) in Calabar Education Zone revealed that only a little fraction of candidates that sat for the examination passed at credit level annually. Table 1 shows the performance of students from 2014 – 2016.

Year	No Enrolled*	Credit (1-6)	Pass (7-8)	Fail (f-9)
2014	355,163	38,934 (10.93%)	82,694 (23.19%)	233,535 (66.88%)
2015	398,767	57,973 (14.96%)	102,786 (26.42%)	238,008 (58.62%)
2016	463,567	23,863 (5.13%)	57,290 (12.35%)	362,414 (82.52%)

Source: Field survey, 2016 (Education Board)

Table 1: Students' performance in English language in SSCE (WAEC), 2014-2016

Looking at the percentage of failure rate within 2014 – 2016, it is clear that the percentage of students failure in English Language has been on the increase. Most worrisome is the observed decline in performance of the State in national examinations compared to other states of the federation. In 2011, the state was adjudged 7<sup>th</sup> best performer. In 2013, it was adjudged 6<sup>th</sup> best performer however in 2014, the state ranked an unacceptable 27<sup>th</sup> position; however in 2016 the story is not better (Asha, 2016). This got many worried and questions raised, demanding explanations for the outcome of events and how to proffer possible solution.

Attempts made toward finding possible solutions in the past yielded results that is completely inadequate given the sharp decline observed between 2014-2016. In order to forestall total collapse to the bottom, the present government in the state has vowed saying that as part of the change program in the education segment and in keeping with the yearning of the stakeholders in the sector, the public schools in the state have been directed to close by 2.00 pm each school day" (Asha, 2016). This is probably to allow school children enough rest, thus, enhancing their learning capacity. The government has also said that it will ensure the improvement of quality of teaching, ensure adequate qualified teachers covering all subjects, and to reposition the educational sector. Presently, an arrangement is ongoing to return all professional teachers who are now performing duties outside the classroom to their professional career (teaching). In fact, the leadership is poised to deviate from the old tradition of only supervising teachers to include, supervision, mentoring and monitoring of

both teachers and students performance. The government has also planned to design a method of working with the parents of these students to be more involved in the monitoring of the learning activities of their wards.

For parents, their efforts towards finding solution have been through organizing extra lessons for their wards. Some rich parents send their children to the so called expensive private schools. The problem still persists as seen among public schools performance in the State. Questions are continuously raised among stakeholders as to the next possible strategy.

Oti (2011), reported that reasons for mass failure in WAEC and JAMB, has been poor grasp of English Language. He explained that English Language as a medium of expression has been a factor that limited students overall performance in national examinations. According to Oti, (2011) one time registrar of WAEC, Mr. Ajibade had urged students to build a level of vocabulary appropriate for their levels because non clarity of expression could undermine their success. According to him, some of the problems student have is their inability to adhere to rubrics and lack of understanding of the demand of questions. Opinions vary as to why some students excel while others do not. Psychologists have noted that our personality traits influence virtually all aspects of our behaviours.

Personality can be define in many ways by many psychologists who wrote on the concept. According to Daminabo (2008), personality is the overall sum of the character that distinguish peoples, or the steadiness of a person's behaviour crossways diverse situation. Additionally it implies those qualities the person is noted for. Traits on the other hand are "enduring dimensions of personality characteristics which, differentiates people from one another" (Colman, 2003). Traits are thus the entire total of stable uniqueness in a person crossways dissimilar times and conditions, which makes him or her unique or distinct from others.

However, there have been increasing attention in the big five personality character and the role they play as regard academic achievement of students. These qualities popularly recognized as the 'BIG FIVE' consist of conscientiousness, agreeableness, openness to experience, extraversion and neuroticism. The acronym CAOEN is utilize to describe them. According to Musek (2007), the earliest sculpt was highly developed by Ernest Tupes and Raymond Christal in 1961 but fail to get to an academic listeners until the 1980s. Some students are found to possess poor personality characteristics with associated poor creative skills, and exhibits low assertiveness and cooperative behavior. This has direct or indirect effects on students' academic achievement in different ways. It has been observe that people, who possess conscientiousness traits, are largely very organized, goal-oriented, competent, and hardworking and are discipline in both social relationships and academic work.

Agreeableness as a trait is characterized by high level of cooperation with people, sympathy, and kindness towards others. It is seen as the extent to which anyone is resolute, accountable and ordered as conflicting to laziness, reckless and impetuous. Wilner (2012) opined that people who are

agreeable tend to be more successful and flexibility in dealing with relationships, are more trusting and are good natured.

Consequently, this research was conceded to investigate the influence of personality traits on academic achievement of senior secondary school students in English Language in Calabar Education zone of Cross River State, Nigeria.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the search for relevant explanatory perspectives, this study was anchored on Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytic theory (1933)

Freud (1933) presented human personality as an abstract contest ground where three psychological constructs- the id, the ego and the superego struggle for control to guide behaviour. The id is biological; ego is psychological; and the super ego, social. The three constructs interact to shape personality. The id is the original source of personality, which later gives rise to the ego and the superego. It is the source of a fixed reservoir of sexual energy available to the individual called the libido- a vital force that serves as a source of motivation which encompasses sexual and life instincts. Freud incorporated all agreeable acts in his conception of life impulse; the id is the seat of all drives and instincts that focuses primarily on alleviation of hunger. It always seeks pleasure and avoids pain. It strives for self- preservation and always seeks to reduce tension. It emanates from its pretrial urge to gratify needs. The id is without logic, values, morals or ethics.

The ego, the seat of rational thoughts, develops out of the id because the organisms need to deal with the realities of the world. It operates on the reality principles and attempts to hold the discharge of energy until there is an appropriate object and circumstance in the external world to satisfy the need. The ego is the "control tower" that governs and regulates personality. It controls conspicuousness and exercise censorship. The ego satisfies id impulses within the limits of society and without violating the superego rules. It can separate wish from fantasy.

The superego, sometimes called the conscience is the internalized representation of values and morals of the society, socialized into the individual since childhood. It judges whether an action is wrong or right based on acceptable standard of the society. It strives for protection, and is the moral/judicial aspect of personality. Freud considered the superego as comprising the ego ideal and conscience. The ego ideal represents things that the individual would like to be while the conscience is the aspect that represents things the individual believes he should not do. The controlling function of the superego occurs largely in the unconscious and therefore not in the individuals awareness. In a normal individual, the three personality constructs usually operate complementarily to bring about an integrated behaviour.

The relevance of this theory to the study indicates clearly that personality is shaped by various types of childhood experiences and unconscious motivation on behavior. several instinctual urge and recollections of harrowing occurrence are subdued early on in life. They are determined out of mindful consciousness keen on the insensible mind, where they go on to cause conscientiousness and disagreement which influences behaviours. These experiences either promote or demote the

child's abilities in academic work. Thus parents/guidance must be aware of the type of environment in which they raise their children. Most children at their early stage in life are found exhibiting some innate traits unconsciously. These traits could be either what they have interest or desire in becoming in future. Parent/guidance should assist them identify and make the right career choice decision which will motivate him/her into studying hard and creating a conducive atmosphere that will promote learning.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

English Language plays a major role in the advancement of students' academic achievement in Nigeria having acquired the status of a second language through its wide- spread functions. Unfortunately, in recent times, Nigerian students especially at the secondary school level no longer record outstanding results in the subject in both internal examination conducted by schools and external examinations such as West African Senior School Certification Examination (WASSCE). This problem of poor performance has also affected other subject areas as well. With the high level of desperation to make it anyhow, students now engages in illegal means to succeed in examination even when they are unable to defend their supposed results in the labour market. Furthermore, it is increasingly becoming difficult to equate competence of people with academic performance as presented in their certificate. However many factors have been adduced as being responsible for this decline in student's academic performance in the subject.

Several factors have been researched in the past as to the cause of this problem, but there seem to be indication that some salient factors may be responsible that needs unraveling. The desire to see this problem curbed, gave rise to this research and the researcher's aim is to find out if there are ways in which the big five personality can help. The researcher as a result has chosen to explore this problem among the students. Therefore, this study aims at examining the influence of personality traits on academic achievement of students in English Language in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State.

## PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The rationale of this research was to scrutinize the effects of personality traits on academic achievement of senior secondary school students' in English language in Calabar education zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. Particularly, this study seek to:

Examine whether there is any influence of conscientiousness on students' academic achievement.

Determine whether there is any influence of agreeableness on students' academic achievement.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The succeeding study inquiries were formulated to guide this study:

To what degree does conscientiousness influence students' academic achievement?

How does agreeableness influence students' academic achievement?

## STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses will be postulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance

Conscientiousness (conscientious and unorganized) do not appreciably influence students' academic achievement.

There is no considerable influence of agreeableness (Agreeable and antagonistic) on students' academic achievement.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review in this study was as follows:

- ✓ Conscientiousness and academic achievement
- ✓ Agreeableness and academic achievement

### CONSCIENTIOUSNESS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Conscientiousness as one of the Big Five personality traits is a representative of an individual's responsibility, scholarly resilience as well as the capacity to arrange information (Bratko, Chamorro & Saks, 2006). Individual who are conscientious are characterized with the propensity to demonstrate self-control, act devotedly and aspire for accomplishment against outer expectations. In studying the relation between personality and achievement motivation, it was found out that achievement was best explained as a conscientious attribute. Studies have predicted positive academic achievement and conscientiousness, especially in predicting positive correlation across all levels of education and across cultures from pre-school through high school and higher institution (Nofle and Robbins; 2007, Laidra, Pullman & Allik, 2007). It has also predicted achievement over teacher's expectations of performance.

Conscientiousness describes task, social required impulse control and goal directed behaviour. It also deals with self-control, persistency, and dependability and will to achieve. Therefore, a psychology student who scored high on conscientiousness, approached his academic task in a more planned and consistent manner, is punctual, well organized, hard-working and persevering. All these factors facilitate them to perform well academically. Thus, highly conscientious students possess high need for achievement, in comparison to those who scored low on this dimension. Other researchers have also reported that conscientiousness was also associated with academic performance (Laidria, Pullman & Allik, 2007).

A study was conducted by Duckworth and Seligman (2005) on conscientiousness and academic achievement, using a sample size of 240 students who were randomly selected, using stratified random sampling technique, a 12 item questionnaire was administered to the sample and data were analyzed with one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). From the results, they observed that conscientiousness is one personality trait that act high and over brainpower factors. Thus, the relationship between conscientiousness and

academic achievement was hypothesized to be mediated by motivation (Hakimi, Hejazi & lavasani, 2011).

Hakimi, Hejazi, and Lavasani (2011) carried out a study on the relationship involving personality qualities (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness and conscientiousness), on accomplishment with 285 students participating in the study (191 female and 94 male). Ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. Instrument used were Neo Big Five Personality Factors and Students GPA. Hypotheses were tested using the independent t test. Result revealed that personality traits has significant effects on academic achievement. The positive relationship that exit linking conscientiousness and academic achievement is linked to the fact that conscientious people are defined by their high level of responsibility; they are achievement oriented and industrious learners. These traits continually motivate them to pursue high academic attainment.

According to Hamper (2009), child conscientiousness influences adult well-being; mastery, health and environment. To Hamper, "conscientiousness refers to broad constellation of attributes reflecting individual's industriousness, orderliness and self-control. He opines that adults who scored low on conscientiousness in childhood are less likely to perform well and achieve academic success in adulthood. While Thompson (2008), sees conscientiousness as a state of being thorough, careful, or vigilant; it implies a desire to do a task well. It is manifested in characteristics behaviour such as being efficient, organized, neat and systematic. People high on this traits tend to be more organized and less clustered in their schools, homes and offices." People who are low in traits are associated with procrastination and are unorganized.

In addition, conscientiousness is one of the big five traits that is persistently linked with students achievement. (Nofle and Robbins, 2007; O' Connor & Paunonen, 2007). Others attributed this to greater motivation to achieve (Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham, 2005). Hence, recent studies are focusing on identifying the fundamental factors essential for relationship between conscientiousness and academic achievement. Some of the mediating factors identified include learning strategies, intrinsic motivation to achieve, and self-efficacy. Schouwenburg and Kossowska (2004) studied the function of learning approach in intervening the association connecting personality traits and academic achievement. Using a path analysis approach found no significant relationship between conscientiousness and exam grades. Their studies fall short to show if the introduction of a intermediary had any cause on the correlation.

Nofle and Robins (2007) in a study on personality predictors of academic outcomes, used a multi-sample of university undergraduates for the study. After meeting the criterion for intercession they establish that the seeming academic capability and academic endeavor mediated the correlation between conscientiousness and grade point average (GPA). The researchers argued that a lot of features, such as morals, self-assessment, learning, and test intriguing ability, and monetary property, are anticipated to concurrently add to academic success. Nofle and Robins (2007) recommended that further study that could better illuminate the complex relationship between the two variables of the Big Five correlates of GPA and SAT scores be carried out.



Conrad and Patry (2012) study on Conscientiousness and Academic achievement: a meditational analysis was predicted on the established relationship that “exists between personality trait of conscientiousness and academic achievement. The study extended prior research by using a path analysis model to explore various proximal traits that may mediate the relationship in a sample of two hundred and twenty three undergraduate university students. The findings were consistent with previous studies; there was a strong positive relationship between conscientiousness and academic achievement as measured by final grades.” The study concluded that personality has a distal cause on academic achievement in the course of more proximal personality.

One of the major attribute of a conscientious individual is that of self-efficacy. “According to social cognitive theory, Bandura (2001) Self-efficacy refers to ones’ belief in ones’ ability to organize and execute a course of action necessary to successfully accomplish a task. Academic self-efficacy or a belief in one’s academic ability is thought to be an important contributor to academic success (Kassen, 2004). There are some effects of self-efficacy on human behaviour. People with high self-efficacy are more motivated than the people of low self-efficacy.” This motivation helps such students overcome failures. The student’s with high academic self-efficacy are apt to exhibit those behaviours associated with conscientious individuals.

There is a general agreement by researchers that sees conscientiousness as the central traits of the Big Five Model mostly associated with achievement. This is because certain degree of conscientiousness may possibly stimulate the student to aim high. Hence, conscientiousness is considered a drive for high achievement. This quality further explains its proximity to the personality trait of conscientiousness. However, researchers have noted that the association amid conscientiousness and academic attainment may be either linear or Curvilinear (Diaz, Glass, Armkoof & Tanofskykruff, 2011). It was concluded that there is an encouraging connection between high degree of accomplishment and low conscientiousness.

Even though studies seems to be obliging a union on the classification of individuality factor that facilitate a considerable percentage of difference in school achievement, such recognition has its focus on other super-traits (Agreeableness, Extraversion and Neuroticism) relatively than major traits (e.g nervousness, emotion, learning strategies). Nevertheless, an inspection of the major qualities would present vital information in relation to the precise non-cognitive variables that may possibly affect students educational accomplishment, like people with the same scores may well have dissimilar key traits scores. Thus, in a study carried out by a researcher who analyzed the emotions of university students and academic performance by means of qualitative interviews and questionnaires. Based on these studies, taxonomy of dissimilar academic emotion and a person account instrument measuring students pleasure, trust, arrogance, release, annoyance conscientiousness, humiliation, despair and tediousness. Academic Emotions Questionnaire (AEQ) were developed and used for the study. The outcome revealed that academic emotion are considerably connected to student’s enthusiasm, knowledge, strategy, cognitive resource,

self-regulation and scholastic attainment as glowing as 10 traits and classroom antecedents.

On learning strategies as mediating factor in the connection linking conscientiousness and academic achievement Biggs, Kember, and Leung (2001), as cited in Fryer, Ginns, Waker and Nakao (2011) “identified two approaches to learning; engage in behaviours that focus on learning the underlying meaning, associating new ideas to old ideas, and critically synthesizing the material. In contrast, students with a surface approach to learning rely on role memorization of material and learn only the essentials to avoid failure.” They are extrinsically motivated while the students with deep approach to learning are intrinsically motivated. In comparing the two sets of academic behaviours, and academic achievement, profound approach to learn are connected with improved educational achievement.

Another study carried out by Ivcevic and Bracket (2014) on conscientiousness’ to predict school achievement, compared conscientiousness and feeling factor skill and grit. The study examined the legitimacy of three purposed self-regulation predictions of school outcome. The sample size was made up of 213. These constructs were measured alongside amid indices of school achievement obtain from report (such as law violating behaviour, educational recognition, honours, GPA and individual report fulfillment with school). Results from a Regression analysis revealed that after scheming for other Big Five correlation amid a minute amount of these traits (particularly dutifulness and attainment striving were absolutely correlated while conscientiousness was negatively correlated) with academic achievement. These principal individuality traits (attainment go-getting, self-control) were found to elucidate approximately 30 percent of difference in academic achievement. It was argued that individuality record results might present significant input to the forecasting of academic achievement and failure among institution of higher education students (particular in extremely discriminating and competitive setting).

Conscientiousness is seen as a factor that relates with the will to achieve, sustain effort and goal setting. This has been found to be a contributing factor to scholarly success (Steel, 2007) in addition to conformity with an individual’s attentiveness in groundwork (Trautwein, Ludtke, Roberts, Schngder & Niggli, 2009) and knowledge associated time organization and effort guideline (Bidjerano & Dai, 2007). Paunomen and Ashton (2004) study on Big Five predictor of educational achievement described a great sample study of 717, wherein conscientiousness and openness to experience traits was match up with two contracted individuality traits procedures in the forecasting of concluding grade in an undergraduate psychology course. Within both association, the junior level trait gauge did considerably enhanced than its senior level aspect measured in the forecasting of lessons score.

In a study by Roy, Sinha and Saman (2013) on emotional intellect and academic accomplishment and stimulus between young people; the paper studied “the emotional intellect of students with high, average and low academic achievement motivation. Sample for the study includes 105 students (48 boys and 57 girls) of class XII of Patna. The data were analyzed with the help of product moment coefficients of

correlation. The findings of the study revealed positive relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement motivation. The study also revealed that students with high, average and low academic achievement motivation differ from one another on emotional intelligence.” This could imply that conscientious students may be highly emotionally intelligent which account for their high academic achievement. Law and Nelson (2007) account that emotional cleverness proficiency are main feature in the educational accomplishment and examination performance of high school and undergraduate students correspondingly. In like vein, Parker, Summerfeldt, Hogan and Majeski (2004) in their study on emotional intellect and educational achievement: examined the transitions from high school to university establish that extremely flourishing learners achieved higher than the unproductive faction on emotional intellect.”

A study by Rode (2007) cited in Roy, Sinha and Saman (2013) envisage that emotional intelligence correlated to academic achievement in support of two reasons. First, academic achievement involve a big pact of uncertainty. Secondly, a greater part of academic toil is self-directed, and requires high level of self-managing. These are characteristics of conscientious individuals. They demonstrate self-regulation, act respectfully and usually display intended or organized behaviour. Hence, individuals (conscientious students) with soaring emotional intellect would achieve better academically. These outcomes may also be attributed to the specific attributes of emotional intelligence, which involve perceiving, comprehending and adaptable emotions (Lam & Kirby, cited in Hoang, 2007).

Dunne and Knight (2015) study the influence of conscientiousness on students’ academic achievement in secondary schools, using a quantitative and qualitative research design for the study, with a population of 385 students from secondary schools. The instrument used to gather data was the questionnaire and interview schedule. The researcher used descriptive statistics such as frequency, mean and Pearson correlation coefficient to analyze the data generated. The outcomes from the study also verify that conscientiousness has the supreme influence in academic achievement in the traditional learning atmosphere comprising the results of the following studies (Bidjerano & Dai, 2007). Lubier, Marganeilha, Werf, Kuyper and Hendriks (2010) establish that conscientious students have a propensity to better self-reliance, which wires their capacity to stay alert on actions important to better learning. Conscientious students are therefore said to be high achievers because they are well organized, thorough, and goal-oriented.

#### AGREEABLENESS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Agreeableness is solitary of the Big Five individuality qualities, characterized by good naturedness, cooperation and trust. Agreeablenesses for instance reflect character like social warmth, nurturance, and emotional support in addition to kindness (Raymund, 2010). It also encapsulates the construct of empathy, cooperation, and cooperation towards other. Which is seen as the extent to which someone is persistent, accountable and structured as at variance to laziness, reckless and spontaneous personality. According to Poropat (2014),

two facets of these personality traits are cooperative/sympathy, which refers to concern of other people’s desires, and civility which refers to benevolence and reliance.

Bidjerano and Dai (2007) in a research conducted on agreeableness and students’ academic achievement in Albany, state university of New York. The population for the study was made up of 219 undergraduate students enrolled in nine classes in Northern US. The instrument for data collection was survey. They accept as true that students with high agreeableness have improved time management skill and efficient guideline. Poropat (2014) further observed that agreeable students incline to be extrinsically aggravated due to educational instruction. Students in the company of agreeable traits obey teacher’s instruction, carry out school task as instructed and are able to obtain good grades. He also associated agreeableness with compliance with teacher instruction and staying focus. With regard to grade point Average (GPA) Komarragu, Karau, Schmeck and Ardic (2011) found that agreeableness personality trait was positively associated with GPA.

Agreeableness reflects likeability and friendliness. The quality of students’ attitude in terms of friendliness to the teacher, the subject, the school environment could enhance student’s likeness for school activities and to stay in school. Studies have shown that students who like their teacher in-turn like the subject matter taught and this invariably provides the motivation for attending to school learning activities. Agreeable individuals are cooperative and trusting, thus are able to participate in-group learning. Cooperative learning have been found to maximize learning potential of participant, thereby producing positive outcome for the learners involved.

An individual seeks result that is favourable to all individuals with whom he or she courteously link. There is a feeling of teamwork, which is very much required in everyday endeavour. Students who work in small groups help one another and then at the end, each perform better than if one studied alone (Singh, 2006). The study by Joshi and Bhatanger (2014) tried to explore the effect of cooperative learning on academic achievement in chemistry among secondary school students. This was a quasi- experimental study based on simple random design for preparing two groups (experimental and control groups). Total of 140 students of class VIII of St. Mary’s School Brynор (UP) were selected as an experimental and control group. Out of which 70 students were considered on experimental group and were exposed to cooperative learning method while another 70 students were named control group and taught through traditional method (lecture + demonstration+ discovery). The students of both groups were taught one period of 40 minutes per day for 30 days. After that a self-made achievement test for chemistry was administered on the groups. The data thus collected, were analysed through t-test. The findings show that cooperative learning oriented teaching and learning is significantly effective for increasing the level of academic achievement of the students. Students with cooperative attitude can analyze, synthesis, and judge ideas considerably. The group communication helps students to study from each one scholarship, skillfulness and experience. This cooperative learning activity invariably increases an individual student chance of performing well.

Agreeableness is a positive feature in situations that need getting alongside others in contrast to disagreeable person. Fingerman (2011) establish that complex variables unfolding middle childhood agreeableness and sociable agreement predicts adolescent educational achievement, behavioural manner and social acceptance 10 years later. He also argued that agreeableness individuals display a tendency to perceive others in a positive height, agreeable children are more responsive to the wishes and perspective of others, and they are less expected to put up with social rejection (Shiner, 2000 cited in Fingerman, 2011).

Moreso, Meeka, Steven, Karau and Alen (2011) carried out research on the five personality traits, knowledge technique and academic achievement of college students. The result revealed that “two of the big five traits, conscientiousness and agreeableness, were positively related with all four learning style, whereas neuroticism was negatively related with all four learning styles. The big five together explained 14% of the variance in grade point average (GPA) and learning styles explained an additional 3% suggesting both personality traits and learning styles contributes to academic achievements. Further, the relationship between openness and GPA was mediated by reflective learning styles.” This later outcome proposes that being academically inquisitive totally enhance academic achievement once students merge this intellectual curiosity with thought information dispensation.

Bannu and Lakki, (2008) carried out a study to identify “the relationship between students different personality and their academic achievements. Survey design was used for this study. Out of 25 districts, 2 districts were randomly selected, out of 12009 students who were studying in the secondary schools of these districts only 800 students of 10<sup>th</sup> class were selected through multistage random sampling method using proportional allocation technique as a sample of the study. A self- developed questionnaire was used as a research instrument. Personally, collected data was entered in SPSS-16. Percentage, Mean, Standard deviation, and Pearson Product Moment were applied as statistical test to achieve the objectives of the study. Results of the study revealed that ‘conscientiousness’ and ‘agreeableness’ personality traits were found high, while ‘extroversion’, ‘neuroticism’ and ‘openness to experience were found low.”

Joshi and Bhatnager (2014) Observed in their study on agreeableness and cooperative learning, that joint success is accompanied by cooperative learning and it enhances social competences/self-esteem, creativity and general psychological health, thus motivating the students to achieve more academically. In fact the study described that cooperative oriented teaching and learning brings learning gains to participants and helps them perform significantly well. Agreeable individuals have trusting and helpful attitude, they are also open to seeking for help when doing homework, and participating in class assignment or task. Researchers have suggested that such behaviours have a positive impact on academic achievement (Dopeyrat, & Manen, 2005).

Yahaya, Aslam, Tai B, Ismail, Shanft, Yahaya, Boon and Hashiyi (2011) Study on agreeableness and correlation linking transformational technique, personality dimension and leadership method, sampled 300 respondents from six chosen

companies by means of simple random technique. Questionnaire named Multi Factor Leadership Questionnaire (MFLQ), Rahim power inventory (RPI) and Big Five personality questionnaire (BFPQ) were utilized for data collection. The question that management style is based on leadership qualities was assumed. Through a pilot study, the reliability of the questionnaire was achieved with Cronbach alpha reliability estimate. The end result of the study revealed that there was a positive association involving transformational technique, personality (openness to experience) and leadership style. It as well demonstrate that agreeable, conscientiousness and openness to knowledge had a encouraging connection with transformational headship approach. The affiliation connecting agreeableness and intellectual accomplishment is seen to lie on the quality of the student’s attitude towards the subjects in the school. Researchers found out that the success of the students could depend on how friendly he or she is with teachers, how interested he or she is on the subject, how cooperative he or she is in the teaching and learning environment and how motivated to learn he or she can be. Whether or not the situation is the same among students in Calabar, Cross River State is the concern of this study.

### III. SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviewed literature on personality traits in line with some variables such as conscientiousness and agreeableness as they relates to student’s academic achievement. Both theoretical and empirical studies reviewed so far in this work have largely shown that personality traits could predict attitudes towards academic pursuits and insight on how much one could perform measured by gain on Grade Point Average (GPA). From the studies, it was gathered that personality embodies individual characteristics that represent the consistent and permanent patterns of one’s emotion, thoughts and behaviour. The Five Factors Traits model of Costa and McCrae have been found as the most dominant model used by most authors used to differentiate individual’s personalities at different context; workplaces and in the school environment.

Academic achievement have been variously defined by researchers. Some say, it is the criterion by which schools use to decide the effectiveness of educational progress and whether a student is doing well or not in the various learning activity particularly in the school subjects. On relationship between conscientiousness and academic achievement, studies show that this trait consistently predicted positive correlation across all levels of education and across cultures from pre-school through high school and higher education respectively. This imply that students with openness to experience personality traits could perform better in activities which test creativity rather than intellectual quotient or performance in a particular school subject. This could account for the reason students with this trait may find themselves not doing well in school subjects.

#### IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

##### RESEARCH DESIGN

The study adopted the Ex-post facto plan which Isangedighi (2012) defines as an investigation that involves some properties of the independent variables that are by their nature or ethical consideration, the investigator cannot manipulate. It is a design used when the research situation does not allow for the use of experimental design that requires either the manipulation or randomization of the attributes of the independent variables.

Ex-post facto design was chosen because the study was primarily designed to investigate the extent to which academic achievement of senior secondary school students in English were influenced by their personality traits. The nature of the problem suggests that, the independent variable (personality traits) of the respondents had already occurred before the investigation commenced. As such, no attempt was made to manipulate them. The researcher therefore observed the influence of the independent variable (personality traits) on the dependent variable (Academic achievement).

##### POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The general populace of the study consisted of the entire higher secondary two (SS 2) students in Calabar Education zone of Cross River State. This Education region has eighty three (83) secondary schools and a total population of 7,123 students. (see Table 2). The population was considered most appropriate for this study because of the subsequent rationale.

S/N	Local Government Area	No of Students	Sampled Students	No of Schools	Sampled Schools
1	Akpabuyo	234	23	7	1
2	Akampa	842	84	18	2
3	Bakassi	192	19	3	0
4	Biase	615	62	16	1
5	Calabar Municipality	3,431	343	16	2
6	Calabar South	1,522	152	8	1
7	Odukpani	287	29	15	1
8	Total	7123	712	83	8

Source: State Secondary Education Board March (2016)

Table 2: Sample of schools and students according to Local Government Areas in Calabar Education Zone

- ✓ The students were considered grown-up as much as necessary to be capable to comprehend the terminology of the examination items and respond to them.
- ✓ The students must have acquired some prerequisite knowledge of the test items measuring the academic achievement.

##### SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The stratified random sampling procedure was employed to the study. The stratification was based on Local Education Authorities in the Education Zone. In each local of the Local Education Authority, the simple random technique was utilized to choose the fragment for the study. 10% of the schools in every local government districts were made use of for the study.

In each of the seven secondary schools selected, 10% of SS II students were randomly chosen from the total population of 7,123 to constitute the sample. This gave a total of seven hundred and twelve (712) students. The target population was stratified according to the local government Areas randomly selected for the study.

##### SAMPLE

The sample of this study consisted of seven hundred and twelve (712) senior secondary school two (SS2) learners in public schools in Calabar Education zone of Cross River State. This is 10% of the total population in the seven local government areas in the zone (see Table 2)

##### INSTRUMENTATION

The instruments used for this study were Students Personality Questionnaire (SPQ) adapted from John and Scrivastava (1999), and English language achievement test (ELAT) adapted from Mock Examination (2015). Conscientiousness and agreeable which items in the original subscale here all mixed up, was modified by the researcher through a template. The researcher used the template to rearrange and modify the items under the various subscales as seen in the instrument. This modification made the original name of the instrument to change from the Big Five personality Inventory to Students Personality Questionnaire (SPQ). The instrument (SPQ) had 5 subscales with 8 items measuring each of the scale to make a total of 44 items. Again, the original instrument which was measured on a five point likert scale was later modified to a four point likert scale as Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) Strongly Disagree (SD).

Furthermore, the other instrument (ELAT) which was adopted from 2015 State students Mock Examination for SS2 was used to illicit responses from students on their academic achievement. which as measured The English language achievement test (ELAT) had 50 objective test items. The test items were administered and the scores were used to represent their individual performance.

##### VALIDITY OF THE INSTRUMENT

The instrument was subjected to face and content validity. To achieve this, the instrument was given to one expert in Educational test and measurement, 2 experts in Educational psychology and the supervisor of the thesis for their thorough scrutiny, criticism and appropriateness of words. Their advice gave the researcher a focus in restructuring some of the items.

##### RELIABILITY OF THE INSTRUMENT

Reliability refers to the extent of stability that a tool displays in determining what it performs consistently. To establish the consistency of the tool (questionnaire), a tryout investigation was made with fifty (50) participants from the general population region who were not fraction of the actual study. Test retest technique was applied to establish the reliability estimates of the instruments. Now, the investigator



gives the unchanged set of respondents the test items to complete and later than two weeks period, they were once more given the similar questionnaire to fill. The gains for the set of paperwork were interrelated. This technique provided the instruments stability crosswise time. The dependability coefficient ranged from 0.79 to 0.91 (see Table 3).

S/N	Variables	Item	Testin	g	X	SD	r <sub>xy</sub>
1	Conscientious/ Unorganized	8	1 <sup>st</sup>	26.14	2.14	0.80	
			2 <sup>nd</sup>	26.16	2.01		
2	Agreeableness / antagonism	8	1 <sup>st</sup>	25.22	1.65	0.79	
			2 <sup>nd</sup>	26.21	1.76		
3	Academic achievement	50	1 <sup>st</sup>	49.06	4.64	0.91	
			2 <sup>nd</sup>	49.57	4.48		

Table 3: Test-retest reliability estimates of the research instruments (N=50)

#### PROCEDURE FOR DATA COLLECTION

The researcher visited the selected schools and informed the authorities about her mission. The teachers who were willing were asked by the researcher to assist her. After sampling those that will be used for the study, with the help of the teachers, the respondents were each issued a copy of the questionnaire containing the Students' Personality questionnaire and the English Language Achievement Test. The instructions were re-emphasized to the respondents. They were also encouraged to ask questions where they did not understand and to give honest responses to every item as it applied to them. At the end of the exercise, the questionnaire copies and the test were retrieved. Out of seven hundred and twelve (712) questionnaires copies and achievement test administered in the field, a total of seven hundred and seven (707) were duly filled and returned. Out of the (707) questionnaires received from the respondents, only 701 were properly completed. Analysis of data was therefore based on 701 respondents.

#### PROCEDURE FOR DATA PREPARATION AND SCORING

After gathering the response form or questionnaire, code/marks were allotted to every item. The information collected were marked and graded thus: A right answer in the administered test attracted 2 marks. An incorrect response attracted 0 marks. Each of the respondents' test script was marked and scored over hundred percent (100%). See Table 4.

Variable	Code
Gender	Male ..... 1 Female ..... 2
Conscientiousness	Conscientious ..... 1 Unorganized ..... 2
Agreeableness	Agreeable.....1 Antagonism .....2
Academic achievement	Add scores on the achievement test items 1-50

Table 4: Coding schedule for the research instrument

#### PROCEDURE FOR DATA ANALYSIS

Data generated is scrutinized by means of the independent t-test statistical technique at .05 level of significance.

##### HYPOTHESIS ONE

Conscientiousness (conscientious and unorganized) does not significantly influence students' academic achievement.

Independent variable: Conscientiousness (conscientious 16- above and unorganized 15- below)

Dependent variable: Academic achievement in English Language

##### HYPOTHESIS TWO

There is no considerable influence of agreeableness (Agreeable and Antagonistic) on students' academic achievement.

Independent variable: Agreeableness (Agreeable -16 above and Antagonistic 15- below)

Dependent variable: Academic achievement in English Language

Test statistics: Independent t-test

#### V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter focuses on the outcome of analysis of data, result interpretation and discussion of findings. The chapter is presented under the following sub-headings:

- General explanation of variables
- Presentation of results
- Discussion of findings

##### GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF VARIABLES

The main independent variable of this study is Personality traits classified into conscientiousness, agreeableness, and students' academic achievement was the dependent variable of the study.

The outcomes of the descriptive data investigation are presented in Table 5.

The result in Table 5 shows that 374 representing 52.68 % of the respondents were conscientious, while 327 (47.32%) were unorganized. Also 313 (44.65 %) were agreeable, while 388 (55.35%) were antagonism.

Table 5 also illustrate the mean and standard deviation of the dependent variable which is academic achievement.

Variables	Categorization/Frequency	Percentage %	
Conscientiousness	Conscientious (16 and above) 374	52.68	
	Unorganized (Below 15) 327	47.32	
Agreeableness	Agreeable(16 and above) 13	44.65	
	Antagonism(Below 15) 388	55.35	
Variables	N	X	SD
Academic achievement	701	53.45	8.21

Table 5: General Description of Variables

## PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

In this segment, every hypothesis of the study was restated and the variables were identified, and the technique for data analysis specified, and the outcome of statistics investigation carried out is presented. Every hypothesis in the study was tested at a significant point of .05 with 699 degree of freedom.

### HYPOTHESIS ONE

Conscientiousness (conscientious and unorganized) does not significantly influence students' academic achievement in English language.

Independent variable is conscientiousness (conscientious and unorganized), while the dependent variable is academic achievement in English language. Independent t-test was employed on the figures to test the proposition. The outcome of data analysis is available in Table 6.

The end result in Table 6 revealed that the calculated t-value of 15.35 is larger than the critical t-value of 1.96 at .05 level of significance with 699 degrees of freedom. This outcome implies that, students with organized personality trait achieved significantly higher than the students with a mean of 60.12 than the unorganized with a mean score of 45.83. With this result, the null hypothesis that conscientiousness does not significantly influence students academic achievement was discarded. These imply that conscientiousness has a considerable influence on students' academic achievement in English language.

### HYPOTHESIS TWO

There is no significant influence of agreeableness (agreeable and antagonistic) on students' academic achievement in English language.

The independent variable is agreeableness. The depended variable is students' academic achievement in English Language. The independent t-test analysis was applied on the data to test the hypothesis, of the data analysis, and presented in Table 7.

GROUP	N	$\bar{X}$	S.D	t-cal.
Conscientious	374	60.12	15.75	15.35*
Unorganized	327	45.83	6.36	

\*Significant at .05 level, critical  $t=1.96$   $df=699$ .

Table 6: Independent t-test analysis showing the influence of conscientiousness (conscientious and unorganized) on students' academic achievement (N= 701)

GROUP	N	$\bar{X}$	S.D	t-cal
Agreeable	313	62.51	15.74	18.48*
Antagonist	388	46.15	6.77	

\*Significant at .05 level, critical  $t=1.96$ ,  $df=699$

Table 7: Independent t-test analysis showing results of the influence of agreeableness on students' academic achievement (N=701)

The result in Table 7 revealed that, the calculated t-value of 18.48 is larger than the critical t-value of 1.96 at .05 point of significance with 699 degree of freedom. This result implies that the academic achievement of students with an agreeable personality trait with a mean score of 62.51 achieved significantly higher than the antagonist with mean score of 46.15. With this result, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is a significant influence on the academic achievement of students with agreeable and antagonistic personality traits in English language.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

### CONSCIENTIOUSNESS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

The results of this hypothesis revealed that conscientiousness had a significant influence on students' academic achievement in English language. The result showed that students who are conscientious achieved academic excellence than those who are unorganized, since conscientiousness implies being thorough, organized, hardworking, willing to achieve, self-control. They also assume high level of responsibility; they are achievement-driven and industrious learners. These traits continually motivate them to pursue high academic attainment.

The findings of this hypothesis is in support of the report of Bratko et al, (2006) who saw conscientiousness as one amongst the big five individuality traits which represent a personality responsibility, educational determination and capability to arrange information. He also observed that students or individuals who are conscientious are characterized with the propensity to demonstrate self-control, act respectfully and aspire for accomplishment alongside outer expectation. This is so, because of their organized disposition, which is seen to have a positive relationship between it and achievement.

Although, findings from this study confirms the reports of Hakimi, Hejazi and Lavasani, (2011), who found a significant relationship or effect of personality trait (conscientiousness) on students' academic achievement. However, the findings of this study does not support the reports of Schouwenburg and Kossowska (2004) who studied on the role of learning strategy in interceding the association linking personality trait and academic achievement. He used a path analysis approach and found no significant relationship between conscientiousness and exam grades. The study falls short to clarify that the introduction of a moderator had no influence on the association.

Findings from this study confirm that personality traits were significantly related to academic achievement and the most dependable forecaster of academic achievement. Conscientiousness is seen as a factor that relates with the will to achieve, sustain effort and goal setting. This has been found to be a contributing factor to academic achievement, in addition to conformity with an individual's attentiveness in research and learning related time management and effort regulation. The finding also confirms that a student who is conscientiously organized prefer planned rather than spontaneous behaviour. He concentrates on a given tasks and

strives hard to achieve them. In this study, it was noted that a strong affirmative correlation connecting conscientiousness and academic achievement were considered by concluding grades.

Conscientiousness was established to be the most forecaster of academic performance. consequently teachers ought to create a conducive atmosphere around the school environment for learning, taking into consideration student's dissimilarity and strength. Such surroundings may possibly promote students to be well organized, diligent, regimented and practical about learning. Also, students ought to be optimistic to build good time management skills and develop a good study habits for the purpose of good academic performance.

#### *AGREEABLENESS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT*

The end result of this hypothesis exposed that, students with agreeable personality traits achieves more academically than those who were antagonistic. This imply that there is a considerable variation in the academic attainment of learners with agreeable personality trait, than those who were antagonistic. Agreeableness encapsulates the construct of sympathy, cooperation, helpfulness towards others, trust likeability and friendliness. The quality of students' attitude in terms of friendliness to the teacher, the subject, the school environment enhances student's likeness for school activities and to stay in school. This is to say that the success of students depends on how friendly he or she is with teachers, how interested he or she is on the subjects, how cooperative he or she is in the learning environment, and how motivated to learn he or she can be.

Agreeableness is a positive feature in situations that need getting alongside others in contrast to disagreeable person. Fingerman (2011) establish that complex variables unfolding middle childhood agreeableness and sociable agreement predicts adolescent educational achievement, behavioural manner and social acceptance 10 years later. He also argued that agreeableness individuals display a tendency to perceive others in a positive height, responds to the wishes and perspective of others, and they are less expected to put up with social rejection (Shiner, 2000 cited in Fingerman, 2011). Students who are extra insightful to requests and perception of others, are less prone to experience social rejection. This implies that, with such skills (altruistic, gentle, kind, sympathetic and express warmth) they gain assess in penetrating groups and more apt to get recognition by peers, thereby, engages in cooperative learning.

The result of this study is in conformity with the study of Joshi and Bhatanger (2014) who explored the outcome of cooperative learning STAD on academic achievement in chemistry among secondary school students. Students with cooperative attitude can investigate, produce and appraise thoughts courteously. The group relations helps students to learn from each other's skillfulness and experience which in turn increases their chances of performing well.

More so, in confirmation of the findings from this study to recognize the affiliation linking students different personality traits character and their academic achievement, discovered that conscientiousness and agreeableness

individuality traits were found high, implying that, these traits have a high significant effect on academic achievement.

Finally, an agreeable person is otherwise known to be one who is co-operative. Teamwork comes with the spirit of co-operation and co-operation allows ordinary people to achieve extraordinary result. This is because when there are contributions of ideas between the high, average and low intelligent students, the performance outcome is often positive since all level of students are forced to think deep and make their contribution. No student ordinarily would love to be a failure, therefore with team spirit they would work extra hard for the betterment of their team.

#### *VI. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY*

This study inspects the influence of Conscientiousness and Agreeable Traits and Academic Achievement of Senior Secondary School Students' in English language in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria.

To give the study a systematic direction, two (2) relevant hypotheses were formulated thus:

Conscientiousness (conscientious and unorganized) does not significantly influence students' academic achievement.

There is no significant influence of agreeableness (Agreeable and antagonistic) on students' academic achievement.

The sampling technique adopted was stratified and Random sampling procedure. A total of 712 students were sampled from the seven Local government areas in the Zone and used for the study. The research blueprint of the study was Ex-post facto design. Data were analyzed with the independent t-test analysis procedure. The entire hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance and the subsequent results were attain.

Conscientiousness (conscientious and unorganized) has a significant influence on students' academic achievement.

Agreeableness (agreeable and antagonistic) has a significant influence on students' academic achievement.

#### *VII. CONCLUSION*

Going by this research, it can be concluded that individual's personality (conscientiousness and agreeable) trait has a significant influence in his academic achievement from the research, it is also clear that conscientious and open individuals are more likely to perform academically better than non-conscientious and those not open to experience.

The study therefore charges parents and tutors to understand the personality traits of their children and wards or students. In situation where these understanding is gained over children's personality, it becomes very easy to improve upon the academic deficiencies caused by their personality., as it will help the teacher think of the teaching technique to adopt that will aid the student in overcoming their trait deficiencies that affects their academic performance in English Language. Finally, students should psychologically be worked upon to attain some level of stability as the research has revealed that emotional stability students tends to perform significantly

better than the emotionally unstable students especially in English Language.

### VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

In observation of the different result, summary, and conclusions of the study, the succeeding commendations are hereby formed for contemplation.

Psychologist, counselors and parents should understand that individual differences exist as a result of personality traits. Therefore, in providing teaching experiences or services, care should be taken to accommodate every individual's uniqueness.

The family and school environment should be an achievement and independence and practiced- oriented and stimulating; by providing individual instructional materials and facilities to take care of the difference among students.

Parents and teachers should avoid acts that will negatively affects students emotion or self- esteem; such as calling student names and passing negative comments about their academic abilities.

Group assignments should be given to students to encourage cooperation and eliminate isolation among students. Wise counsels should also be given to students to be conscientious and agreeable; as these traits enhances academics performance positively.

### IX. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Base on the finale of the study as summarized, the subsequent suggestions were proffer to advance research.

Further studies should be carried out to outline the influence of all the traits and academic achievement of students in English language.

Although, the present study concentrated on students in senior secondary school, further studies should be carried out on the influence of personality traits an student's academic achievement in primary and junior secondary schools using the personality test question (PTQ).

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