

# PERSONALITY TRAITS AS PREDICTORS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MURANG'A COUNTY, KENYA

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**Abstract:** The aim of this study was to determine the relationship between students' HEXACO personality traits and academic achievement. The study objective was to explore the relationship between HEXACO personality traits and academic achievement in Murang'a County, Kenya. The study was guided by HEXACO Personality Traits Theory (Ashton & Lee, 2006) and it adopted correlational research design. Purposive sampling, proportionate sampling and stratified random sampling were used to select 379 form three students (183 boys and 196 girls) ranging from 14 to 18 years from 10 public secondary schools in Murang'a County, Kenya. Piloting of the questionnaires was done in one of the public secondary school. Data was collected using HEXACO Personality Inventory (Ashton & Lee, 2006) and the researcher adopted academic achievement proforma table. Academic achievement was obtained from their third term examination scores. Person's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and Multiple Regression Analysis were used to test the stated null hypothesis set at  $\alpha=0.05$ . Analysis of the collected data was done using SPSS version 20.0 for windows while descriptive statistics such as percentages, means and frequencies were used to summarize the collected data. The results revealed that there was no statistically significant relationship between HEXACO personality traits and academic achievement at the facet level but there was statistically significant positive correlation at the sub facet levels like in the emotionality subscale, the facets of fearfulness ( $r(377) = .14, p < .05$ ) and anxiety ( $r(377) = .11, p < .05$ ) had significant positive correlations with academic achievement. Moreover, creativity ( $r(377) = .17, p < .05$ ) a sub facet of openness to experience had a significant positive correlation with academic achievement. Recommendation of the study was that students should learn the personality traits that enhance academic achievement like anxiety management traits and creativity when learning.

**Keywords:** HEXACO Personality Traits; Academic Achievement; Secondary School Students.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Academic achievement is a topic of discussion among students, teachers, and parents since education is seen as the key to success in life and to economic development. Due to this reason various stakeholders work every day in order to improve academic achievement. In fact, most parents and guardians expect to see their children actualize their capabilities and become competitive in the modern world through attaining good grades. In addition, most countries deem quality education as key driver of economic development.

Globally, good academic results are very important because it allows one to move from one level of education to another like primary, secondary or college. Because of this significance attached to academic performance, many families and different countries dedicate a lot of time and resources to prepare their students for success (Bücker et al, 2018). For instance, according to the United Nations (2019), academic achievement is the key for a country to achieve development goals.

Most countries in Africa are developing and education is important for national development (Geta, 2012). Several countries in Africa have reported cases of under achievement among its citizens. For example, in Botswana researchers have reported deteriorating standards of education due to the failure of students in both primary and students in schools (Makwinja, 2017). When students underperform they are not well placed to make decisions that affect their lives and others (United Nations, 2019).

In Kenya, education is critical to the attainment of national development agenda as outlined in the Vision 2030. The importance of education sector is, perhaps, best indicated by the fact that it gets the biggest share of the national budget. For example, in the national budget for the Financial Year 2020/2021, education was allocated a big share of Sh497.7 billion. This money is meant to support tuition for the free primary and day secondary education programmes, recruitment of teachers, and infrastructure development. Another indicator of the significance of education is the government policy of free primary education and 100% transition to secondary school which has greatly contributed to the increased enrolment in public secondary schools.

Locally, research indicates that a range of variables are responsible for students' academic achievement ranging from home environments, age, gender, motivation, personality characteristics, teachers' characteristics, instructional facilities and materials (Gakure, Mukuria, & Kithae, 2016). More researches done are on; self-regulated learning (Mutweleli, 2014); and motivation (Gachigi, 2018). This shows that research has already been done on various parameters which contribute to academic achievement, but very little has been done on HEXACO personality traits. Therefore, there was need to undertake such a research.

The proponents of HEXACO Personality Traits Theory (Ashton & Lee, 2006) argue that there are six personality traits which are significant to students learning and they include: Conscientiousness, Openness to Experience, Honesty-Humility, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Emotionality. Each trait is identified by specific characteristics. According to Ashton and Lee, (2006) the students' type of personality traits may explain why some students do better than their colleagues in school despite learning in the same environment. Therefore, it is significant to study personality traits in predicting academic achievement in secondary schools' students in Murang'a County in order to help students attain better academic outcomes.

HEXACO personality traits have been linked to different levels of academic achievement. In explaining the links between the two, research suggests that specific aspects of students' personality traits attract them to environments that are compatible with them (Ashton & Lee, 2015). Therefore, when personality and the criteria for academic achievement overlap, a direct relationship between the two may be established (Ashton & Lee, 2015). From the foregoing, it may be expected that different personality traits relate differently with academic achievement. For example, Conscientiousness which represents being careful, efficient, and organized predict academic achievement in different age groups ranging from nursery school to higher institutions of learning (Vedel, 2016). Notably, Conscientiousness is associated with good academic results mainly because of its aspect of organizing time, information, and physical environment (Murray, 2014).

The trait of Openness to Experience involves using free imagination in everyday life experience, being inquisitive, and being attracted to unusual people and ideas (Vedel, 2016). Studies indicate that students who score high in this trait test out ideas, have higher intellectual curiosity, and are more likely to perform better than those who score low (Vedel, 2016). Agreeableness is the trait oriented to interpersonal relationships and is characterized by forgiving people cooperating and being able to control once temperament and is positively related to academic achievement in some studies (Ashton & Lee, 2015). For example, Students who cooperate with teachers and other students have high academic achievement compared to those who don't cooperate with teachers and other students. Honesty Humility will provide potential significance to this study since it helps to predict unethical behaviors' across a variety of contexts like students cheating during an exam (Ashton & Lee, 2015). Emotionality refers to stress that lead to anxiety and fear in life. For example, students who cannot withstand stress emanating from exams are overwhelmed by anxiety and fail in their exams. On the other hand students who manage their exam anxiety are able to perform well.

Extraversion is a dominant trait in students who are confident, exhibit a positive feeling about themselves, and enjoy interacting with others. Students who score high in this trait are optimistic and show high spirits compared to low scorers (Ashton & Lee, 2015). The students' personality traits may explain why some students do better than their colleagues in school despite learning in the same environment.

### Statement of the Problem

This study was done to address low academic achievement in secondary schools. The Ministry of Education for the last three years reported consistent low academic achievement in KCSE despite the government interventions. Similar trend was also recorded in Murang'a County which consistently recorded poor academic achievement. If this was not investigated and addressed, persistent low academic achievement in KCSE in Murang'a County would have continued to hamper students from life rewarding opportunities in future like furthering education and job opportunities. Thus there was need to study variables that enhance or inhibit students' academic achievement.

Available researches have not investigated sufficiently how grit predicts academic achievement in a Kenyan context. Studies done in Kenya on factors predicting academic achievement have concentrated on, achievement goal orientation, academic motivation and academic resilience.

### OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This study was guided by the following objective:

To determine the relationship between HEXACO personality traits and academic achievement.

### RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

The following hypothesis was used:

H<sub>a1</sub>: There is a significant relationship between HEXACO personality traits and academic achievement.

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was guided by HEXACO Personality Traits Theory (Ashton & Lee, 2006). According to the proponents of HEXACO Personality Traits Theory (Ashton & Lee, 2006) there are six personality traits which are significant to students learning and they include; Conscientiousness, Openness, Agreeableness, Honest, Extraversion, and Emotionality. One uniqueness of HEXACO personality traits over the Big Five is the added trait of Honesty Humility which deals with students unethical behaviours. In explaining the links between personality and academic achievement, the theory generally posits that aspects of the specific personality trait of a student attract him or her to environments that are compatible with it (Ashton and Lee, 2006). Therefore, when the academic achievement criteria and personality overlap, a direct relationship between a specific personality trait and academic achievement may be established.

Ashton and Lee, (2006) added the sixth personality trait to the Big Five personality traits which is Honesty-Humility and it stands for morality, covering socially desirable behaviours such as being sincere, faithful, and honest. This trait is very unique because it will help to contribute to students' honesty in exams which will in turn reduce exam cheating. For example, students scoring high in this trait do not break school rules or cheat in exams to get better results rather they take responsibility of their results. In contrast, students who score low on the same scale may break the school rules or cheat in exams which will give a false impression of their achievement.

Ashton and Lee (2007) described Emotionality as the personality trait that deal with stress and make people to experience anxiety and fear in life. In school context, students who score high on this trait are able to deal with an exam anxiety and other stresses related to the new school environment. They are calm, emotionally stable and work easily with others with little or no friction hence scoring well in school compared to student who fear exams and are over whelmed by exam anxiety and end up performing poorly. They find it difficult to get along with others, score low on this scale and hence need academic guidance. The Extraversion trait refers to individual differences in social situations and positive emotionality. Students who score high on academic achievement are those who freely interact with others. This trait for example, will help a student not to shy when asking or answering questions in class. On the contrary, students who score low on this scale are less lively and shy when asking or answering questions.

The fourth trait is Agreeableness which refers to Students who are usually warm, friendly and get along with others. These are the students who are optimistic in school and get good grades in exams through cooperating with teachers and other students (Ashton & Lee, 2015). On the contrary, students with low score on this scale value their interests more than those of others. Students who are determined and striving for excellence, careful, or diligent, have self-discipline, and aim for achievement in their performance rank high on Conscientiousness (Ashton & Lee, (2015). For example students who rank high on this trait organize their physical surroundings, time and think carefully while making decisions hence maintaining good performance. On the contrary, students who score low on this scale avoid challenging situations and are not concerned with their surroundings and hence poor performance (Ashton & Lee, (2015).

Students Open to Experience are intellectually curious and enquire on areas of knowledge (Ashton & Lee, 2015) Students who score high in this trait are imaginative, inquisitive and are attracted to new ideas and people and they score high in academics. On the contrary students who score low in this scale are the ones who are not curious intellectually, lack attraction to new ideas and are not creative hence score poorly in academics.

In the present study, a student who scores lowly on HPT shows clearly that he or she has no or very little learning techniques. In explaining the links between personality and achievement, the theory generally posits that students' personality trait attracts them to environments that are compatible with it. Therefore, when the academic achievement criteria and personality overlap, a direct relationship between a specific personality trait and academic achievement may be established.

## 2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

From the reviews, a few studies have directly investigated the correlation between the narrow facets of the HPT and secondary school students' academic achievement. A study by Khan and Sarwar, (2016) at the University of Punjab, Pakistan studied the relationship of Extraversion, Conscientiousness and Openness using a sample of 80 students aged between 21 to 24 years. The HEXACO 60 item scale was used. The finding showed that these personality traits significantly predict students' academic outcome. Conscientiousness predicted academic achievement more than the others. There is need to look for a sample from a different location and level of education since this can support or deviate from the current findings. Our country is still developing and has unique and different challenges compared to other developed countries where most of the studies have been done.

Edward and Kwabena, (2016) conducted a research on the personality traits and academic achievement using college students in Accra Region of Ghana. The main aim was to investigate whether there is any correlation between personality traits and academic performance. A sample of 300 participants aged 18 to 40 years completed the Big Five inventory. From the findings, positive associations were found between academic performances of college students who were Conscientious, Agreeable and Openness. However, this study used the Big Five personality traits which do not have Honesty Humility trait found in HPT, which is the focus of this study. Moreover a tertiary institution was involved to collect the sample and it would be important if the same is done in a secondary school set up.

Moyosola (2013) conducted a study on personality characteristics using a secondary school in Nigeria. Three hundred and ninety eight students formed the sample. Their ages ranged between 10 to 19 years. The Big Five Inventory (BFI) was used. The findings revealed that Agreeableness and Conscientiousness correlated and predicted academic performance. The results also revealed that Openness to Experience significantly predicted academic performance. In this study Extraversion revealed the least association with academic performance. This study only concentrated on Big Five personality traits leaving Honesty-Humility trait which is included in this current study.

Yaman, (2016) investigated the Big Five personality traits and academic performance using 202 university students in a private university in Istanbul, Turkey who were between 18 – 20 years. Conscientiousness was seen to have an association with the GPA and positively relating with all the four learning styles. Moreover Openness to Experience and Agreeableness also showed positive relation to GPA which shows that students who are Conscientious, cooperative and cognitively inquisitive acquire high academic achievement. This study collected data using the Big Five Inventory while the present research will collect data using the HEXACO personality inventory revised.

Another study was conducted by Adrina and Marina, (2016) where the focused on HEXACO model and the well-being of employees. Only thirty four people who were in the age bracket of 22 and 54 participated from a university in Romania. They discovered that some traits are strong correlates of employee psychological wellbeing. This study correlated HEXACO model of personality with employee well-being and it would be interesting to correlate it with academic achievement.

Lorenzo, (2019) studied HEXACO personality traits and ability to manage one's own effect in Italy. A total of four hundred and thirteen adults took part in this study. Their ages ranged between eighteen and twenty six. Females were two hundred and ninety while males were on hundred and ninety three. The results revealed that HEXACO sixty and the ability to manage ones interest reveal that extraversion has more effect on expressing positive effects. This study used adults while the current study targets secondary going students. Moreover, the study did not include grit which is a variable in the current study.

Alda et al. (2014) Researched on academic achievement and factors that affect it in Italy. A total of four hundred and thirty nine students answered the questionnaires. They detected that some personality traits in HEXACO influenced academic results. It is important to note that they only focused on personality traits and academic achievement while the current study is studying HEXACO personality traits, grit and academic achievement. In yet another study Frank et al. (2017) examined the HEXACO personality traits using a sample of three hundred and fifty five college respondents in United States. The noted that Some traits of HEXACO predicted school related adjustments. This study was carried out on university students while the current study will be carried out on secondary students.

Ryesa et al. (2021) Researched on the personality traits and academic achievement on adolescents in Punjab. A total of three hundred and eight adolescents were selected using purposive sampling technique. The big five personality inventory helped to collect information from participants. The outcome was that agreeableness and extraversion correlated positively to academic achievement. This study need to be enhanced by adding grit as a predictor of academic achievement which may add a significant contribution in this area of education. Moreover, this study used the big five inventory while the current study will use the HEXACO personality traits inventory.

Abouzeid et al. (2021) investigated factors influencing academic achievement. A sample of three hundred and thirty three students at Canal University took part in this study. The big five personality inventory enabled them to get information on personality traits. They also used their grades in end semester exam to measure performance. The results of this study reported that personality traits cannot be ignored in learners for they have a big impact on how they perform. There is need for another research to be carried out where another target is used and a different tool.

Williams et al. (2016) researched on paranormal beliefs and HEXACO personality traits at Wales. A total of one hundred and thirty seven university students took part in this study. The personality traits like honesty and openness to new experience demonstrated a positive correlation with paranormal beliefs. The researchers concluded that honesty humility adds value to this study compared to the big five model which does not include it. This study focused on paranormal beliefs and HEXACO personality domains of personality while the current study focus on HPT, grit and academic achievement. Interesting findings can be found which will go a long way to enlighten people to give credible results in all that they do. This will make one to be placed where he or she belong without favourism of lies.

### 3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

#### Participants

The participants of this study were all form three students in public secondary schools in Murang'a County. There were 379 students (183 boys and 196 girls) drawn from 10 public secondary schools in Murang'a County. The participants were all in the third year of secondary education (i.e. form three) in Kenya.

#### Measures

We adapted the 60 HEXACO Personality Inventory-Revised (Ashton & Lee, 2006). Participants responded on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The expected range of scores was a minimum of 60 and a maximum of 300. Each dimension consists of four sub dimensions. Thus, dimension scores ranged from 4 to 20. A high score on a dimension indicate high endorsement of that particular personality trait of HPT

Academic achievement. Students termly scores were obtained from school records. To make academic achievement marks comparable, the scores were transformed into T scores.

### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The objective of the study sought to determine the relationship between secondary school students' HEXACO personality traits and academic achievement. Based on this objective, a null hypothesis was formulated that there is no significant relationship between secondary school students' HEXACO personality traits and academic achievement. In efforts to test

this hypothesis, the HEXACO subscale total and mean scores were computed as per the guidelines by Ashton and Lee (2006). Academic achievement was inferred from form three end of term three examination scores that were transformed into T-scores. A description of the HEXACO subscale scores and academic achievement scores in terms of minimum, maximum, mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis is presented in Table 4.1.

As shown in Table 4.1, the subscale scores ranged from 1.20 to 1.60. The mean score for Honesty Humility was 2.99 (SD = 0.58) ranging from 1.50 to 4.80. The mean score for Emotionality was 3.37 (SD = 0.62) with a minimum score of 1.20 and a maximum score of 4.90. Regarding Extraversion, the mean score was 3.32 (SD = 0.54) ranging from 1.50 to 4.90. Agreeableness had an average score of 3.17 (SD = 0.51) ranging from 1.40 to 4.60. The mean score of Conscientiousness was 3.46 (SD = 0.56) with a range of 1.60 to 5.50. Lastly the mean score of Openness to New Experience was 3.64 (SD = 0.55) with a range of 1.50 to 4.90. The academic achievement scores had a mean of 50 (SD = 10.00) with a range of 38.68 to 82.64. The skewness coefficients for all the variables ranged from -.87 to .26 while their kurtosis coefficients ranged from -.65 to .79. These coefficients indicate that distribution shapes for the study variables were approximately normal as per the criteria outlined by Hair et al. (2017) that a normal distribution has both skewness and kurtosis coefficients ranging between -1 and +1. Table 4.1

**Table 4.1: Descriptive Statistics for HEXACO Subscales and Academic Achievement**

Subscale/Variable	Min	Max	M	SD	Sk	Kur
HH	1.50	4.80	2.99	.58	.00	.02
E	1.20	4.90	3.37	.62	-.17	-.08
EX	1.50	4.90	3.32	.54	-.34	.33
A	1.40	4.60	3.17	.51	-.23	.17
C	1.60	5.50	3.46	.56	-.13	.39
O	1.50	4.90	3.64	.55	-.87	.79
AA	38.68	82.64	50.00	10.00	.26	-.65

Note. HH = Honesty Humility; E = Emotionality; EX = Extraversion; A = Agreeableness; C = Conscientiousness; O = Openness to New Experience; AA = Academic Achievement; Min = Minimum; Max = Maximum; M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; Sk = Skewness; Kur = Kurtosis.

To test the first hypothesis, the correlations among the HPT subscales and academic achievement were examined using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The resultant correlation matrix was as presented in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: Correlations between HEXACO Subscales and Academic Achievement**

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. E		-					
2. HH		-.04	-				
3. EX		.01	-.08	-			
4. A		.01	.24**	.18**	-		
5. C		.08	.29**	.40**	.30**	-	
6. O		.29**	.07	.36**	.26**	.40**	-
7. AA		.10	-.04	.00	-.06	-.05	.00

Note. E = Emotionality; HH = Honesty Humility; EX = Extraversion; A = Agreeableness; C = Conscientiousness; O = Openness to New Experience; AA = Academic Achievement.

The results in Table 4.2 show that only emotionality subscale of HEXACO personality traits had a positive non-significant correlation with academic achievement ( $r(377) = .10, p > .05$ ). On the other hand, honesty humility ( $r(377) = -.04, p > .05$ ), agreeableness ( $r(377) = -.06, p > .05$ ) and conscientiousness ( $r(377) = -.05, p > .05$ ) subscales had very weak negative non-significant correlations with academic achievement. Notably, extraversion, and openness to experience had zero correlation with academic achievement ( $r(377) = .00, p > .05$ ). As per the results in Table 4.4, the data did not provide sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis hence the hypothesis (H01) was retained and it was concluded that there was no statistically significant relationship between HEXACO personality traits and academic achievement.

The above findings were quite interesting prompting the researcher to explore more on how the facets of each HEXACO sub scale correlated with academic achievement. The results were as presented in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3: HEXACO Subscale Facets Correlation with Academic Achievement**

Subscale/ Facets	ra	Subscale/ Facets	ra
Honesty Humility		Agreeableness	
Sincerity	.10	Forgiveness	.08
Fairness	-.07	Gentleness	-.01
Greed avoidance	-.16**	Flexibility vs anger	-.12*
Modesty	.02	Patience	-.08
Emotionality		Conscientiousness	
Fearfulness	.14**	Organization	-.20**
Anxiety	.11*	Diligence	.12*
Dependence	.01	Perfectionism	.07
Sentimentality	.01	Prudence	-.081
Extraversion		Openness to experience	
Social self-esteem	.00	Aesthetic appreciation	-.06
Social boldness	-.07	Inquisitiveness	-.17**
Sociability	.02	Creativity	.17**
Liveliness	.08	Unconventionality	.03

Note. N= 379.

a correlation with academic achievement.

\*\*  $p < .001$

\* $p < .05$

As presented in Table 4.5 the study established interesting correlations between the HEXACO personality traits subscale facets and academic achievement. In the Honesty humility subscale, the facet of greed avoidance had a significant negative correlation with academic achievement ( $r(377) = -.16, p < .05$ ). In the emotionality subscale, the facets of fearfulness ( $r(377) = .14, p < .05$ ) and anxiety ( $r(377) = .11, p < .05$ ) had significant positive correlations with academic achievement. In the agreeableness subscale, the facet of flexibility versus anger had a significant negative correlation with academic achievement ( $r(377) = -.12, p < .05$ ). In the conscientiousness subscale, two facets had significant correlations with academic achievement namely: Organization ( $r(377) = -.20, p < .05$ ) and diligence ( $r(377) = .12, p < .05$ ). The openness to experience subscale had two facets with significant correlations with academic achievement. These were: Inquisitiveness ( $r(377) = -.17, p < .05$ ) and creativity ( $r(377) = .17, p < .05$ ).

## 5. DISCUSSION

The study established that there was no statistically significant correlation between Hexaco personality traits and academic achievement at the facet level but there is a statistically significant positive correlation at the sub facet level like in the emotionality subscale, the facets of fearfulness ( $r(377) = .14, p < .05$ ) and anxiety ( $r(377) = .11, p < .05$ ) had significant positive correlations with academic achievement. The findings of the present study did not agree with those reported by Khan and Sarwar, (2016), who focused on university students and found that there is significant positive correlation between HPT and academic achievement This implies that the level of schooling may be a significant factor in the measurement of these variable (HPT and academic achievement).

This finding supported that of earlier study by Moyosola (2013) in Nigeria who correlated HEXACO personality traits and academic achievement among secondary school students. This study supported their findings that there is a positive correlation of HPT with academic achievement at the sub facet level. The sample used by Moyosola (2013) was similar to the one used in the current study in terms of the level of schooling. Thus, irrespective of cross-cultural differences and different study locations, HEXACO personality traits sub facets were found to be positively correlated to academic achievement. Lorenzo, (2019) studied 413 secondary students in Italy and Frank et al. (2017) studied the relationship between HPT and academic achievement among 355 international students in the United States and supported the idea that academic achievement is best predicted by HPT at the sub facet level.

The findings obtained from this study were also consistent with those of an earlier study done by Alda et al. (2014) in Italy among secondary school students. The study supports the findings that there is need to adopt complex approaches for undertaking action addressing students' difficulties in attaining good academic achievement Alda et al. (2014). These approaches include training students to possess personality traits that enhance academic performance like the HPT. These findings of this study were not consistent with those of Ryesa et al. (2021) studied adolescents at Punjab and Abouzeid et al. (2021) studied university students in Egypt and found that there is a correlation between HEXACO personality traits and academic achievement. The findings also did not agree with earlier studies done by Edward and Kwabena, (2016) which reported that the respondents' HPT was correlated positively to their academic achievement. This implies that the level of schooling may be a significant factor in the measurement of these variables (HPT and academic achievement).

As indicated in Table 4.5, honesty humility subscale, the facet of greed avoidance had a significant negative correlation with academic achievement. In the emotionality subscale, the facets of fearfulness and anxiety had significant positive correlations with academic achievement. In the agreeableness subscale, the facet of flexibility versus anger had a significant negative correlation with academic achievement. In the conscientiousness subscale, two facets had significant correlations with academic achievement namely: Organization and diligence. The openness to experience subscale had two facets with significant correlations with academic achievement. These were: Inquisitiveness and creativity. These results supported earlier findings by Yaman, (2016), who in his study using a sample of 202 university students in a private university in Istanbul, Turkey supports that HPT predict academic achievement best at the facet level.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study's objective was to explore the relationship between HEXACO personality traits and academic achievement. The findings revealed that there is no statistically significant relationship between HPT and academic achievement at the facet level but there is a statistically significant positive correlation at the sub facet level like in the emotionality subscale, the facets of fearfulness ( $r(377) = .14, p < .05$ ) and anxiety ( $r(377) = .11, p < .05$ ) had significant positive correlations with academic achievement. Findings obtained did not support those of Khan and Sarwar, (2016), who targeted university students and reported significant positive correlation between HPT and academic achievement It was concluded that schooling level should be considered when dealing with these variables (HPT and academic achievement).

This study only focused on secondary school students who were only form threes and may have developed HEXACO personality traits. It can also be done at primary schools, colleges and universities. Also another study of this type can be carried out on different parts of Kenya or the world and more specifically in private schools since the current study only involved public secondary schools.



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