PERSONALITY TRAITS AS CORRELATES OF LEARNED HELPLESSNESS AMONG LOW ACHIEVING STUDENTS IN MATHEMATICS

Dr. (Mrs) P. U. Ekeh & Nwanze Rita Chinenye
Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance & Counselling
University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, **NIGERIA**

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between personality traits and learned helplessness among low achieving students in mathematics. It was conducted in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. From a population of 552 low achieving students in Mathematics in 14 secondary schools, a sample of 210 low achieving students in mathematics were drawn from 7 secondary schools using purposive and simple random sampling techniques respectively. Three instruments named 'Big five Personality Traits Assessment Scale (BPAS), Learned Helplessness Scale (LHS) and Diagnostic Mathematics Test (DMT) were used for data collection. The instruments were validated in terms of content and face values. The reliability of the instruments was also determined through test-retest method. Multiple regression, Pearson product moment correlation statistics, Anova and t-test associated with multiple regression were used to analyze the data collected. Results got after data analysis indicated that the joint personality traits and personality trait of extraversion when taken independently, showed significant relationship with learned helplessness; while neuroticism, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness did not have significant relationship with learned helplessness. Based on these findings, appropriate recommendations were made, among which was that government should ensure that trained guidance counselors are employed in public secondary schools in order to help students with the problem of learned helplessness in studying in mathematics.