

Personality Traits of NEO Five Factors and Statistics Anxiety among Social Sciences University Students

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Abstract : In Nigeria, statistics is a compulsory course required from all social sciences students as part of their academic training. However, a rising number of social sciences undergraduates usually express statistics anxiety. The prevalence of statistics anxiety among undergraduates in social sciences has created a growing concern for educators and researchers in the higher education institutions, mainly because this statistics anxiety adversely affects their performance in statistics and research methods courses. From a societal perspective it is important to reverse this trend. Although scholars and researchers have highlighted some psychosocial factors that influence statistics anxiety in students but few empirical studies exist on the association between personality traits of NEO five factors and statistics anxiety. It is in the light of this situation that this study was designed to assess the extent to which the personality traits of NEO five factors influence statistics anxiety of students in social sciences courses. The participants were 282 undergraduates in the faculty of social sciences at a state owned public university in Nigeria. The findings demonstrate that the personality traits contributing to statistics anxiety include openness to experience, conscientious, extraversion, and neuroticism. These results imply that statistics anxiety is related to individual differences in personality traits and suggest that certain aspects of statistics anxiety may be relatively stable and resistant to change. An effective and simple method to reduce statistics anxiety among social sciences students is to create awareness of the statistical and methodological requirements of the social sciences courses before commencement of their programmes.

Keywords : personality traits, statistics anxiety, social sciences, students

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