

## Personality Factors as Correlates of Gambling False Hope Syndrome among Undergraduates in University Of Port Harcourt

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### **Abstract**

*This study examined personality factors as correlates of gambling false hope syndrome ('FHS') amid undergraduates in the University of Port Harcourt. The study adopted a correlation research design. Five research questions and five corresponding hypotheses tested at 0.5 level of significance steered the study. A sample of 550 undergraduates was drawn from a population of 2,153 students in Education faculty through simple random sampling technique (SRST). Two instruments were espoused for data assemblage explicitly; False Hope Syndrome and Psychological Traits in Gambling (PTG). The instruments were authenticated by experts in measurement and evaluation unit. Pearson correlation and z-test were used for data analysis. The study found out that extraversion, conscientiousness, neuroticism, openness to experience, and agreeableness had substantial strong optimistic connection with gambling 'FHS'. Five recommendations were made among which were that; Tertiary institutions should provide personality inventors to screen and detect personality traits that are vulnerable to gambling behavior and provide counselling service for them; parents' proper monitoring of their children is required to curb the gambling menace in the life of undergraduates. The study concludes that there is a significant relationship amidst extraversion and 'FHS' in gambling amid undergraduates. Also it concludes that extraversion and meticulous adolescent students are probable to become victims of 'FHS'.*

**Key Words:** Personality factors, correlates, gambling, false hope, undergraduates.

### **Introduction**

Many years ago, gambling was considered to be a form of greed and covetousness, it was prohibited by some states and religious laws but today, gambling has earned the interest of the government as it is regarded as an adult means of recreation and entertainment. The decision of legalizing gambling in Nigeria by the National Lottery Act of 2005 has earned gambling the publicity of the media as it is been painted by the media as a means of financial gain which has damaged the reputation of dignity in labour and reward for hard work. Since gambling has created an illusion of false hope in making money, without stress by enticing people to believe that money can be made by chance, skill and, knowledge of the game rather than focusing on hard work and educational advancement, it has distorted their thoughts on the reality of how things should be.

The Nigeria government legalized three forms of gambling which are; sports betting, lottery games, and casino gambling, this has led to the availability of sport gambling centers in streets and strategic location. There are 19&e than fifty six (56) gambling centers surrounding the University of Port Harcourt environment and undergraduates are the target population. In Nigeria today, as a result of technological advancement, the level of undergraduates involved in gambling behaviour such as 1960bet, bet9ja, naira bet, merry bet is on the increase, and more advanced gambling has been initiated through virtual betting which is often referred to by these undergraduates as way of getting quick cash by predicting programmed games to win instant reward. Gambling is considered a non-drug addictive behavior that has mined lives more than most drugs induced addictive behaviors. Gambling unlike alcohol or drug abuse is considered as drugless impulse control disorder (Peck, 1986).

Gambling has been largely affirmed as staking or venturing currency or somewhat valuable asset on an occasion with an undefined consequence with the likelihood of charming cash or other resources (Kom & Shaffer, 1999; Potenza, Fiellin, Heninger, Rosa, & Mazure, 2002). The possibility of its winning outcome has made gambling a game of chance and probability. Turner (2005) posited that gambling is an action of risking the forfeiture of something valuable (typically currency) on an unreliable result with the expectation

of winning something of superior worth (frequently currency). This is to say that undergraduates usually stake a small or huge sum of money on selected sports to win a greater amount of money which is often held in high expectation until the outcome of their prediction becomes real.

According to Wikipedia (2010), hope is a belief in an optimistic consequence linked to actions as well as situations in a being's life. In line with this, hope theory views hope as a likeness of somebody's perception regarding their capabilities to; clearly conceptualize a goal, develop the precise approaches to grasp those goal-line, initiates and sustains the motivation for using those strategies. However beliefs may either be realistic or unrealistic, but it still has to do with individual cognition. Polivy and Herman (2002) referred 'FHS' to circumstances in which individuals repetitively try as well as fail to realize a target since they have impractical prospects around their probability of triumph, thus this kind of people remain hopeful often unrealistically hope that they will succeed in their next attempt.

Personality qualities are intellectualized as dimension of a being's alterations in propensities to display reliable pattern of opinions, emotional state as well as activities transversely events, developing phases in addition to contexts (McCrae & Costa, 2003). Larson and Buss (2005) averred personality as "the set of psychological features as well as mechanism within the person that is prearranged and relative continuing as well as that impacts his or her connections within the surroundings. In addition, Stantrock (2006) sees personality as the characteristic opinions, feelings in addition to behavior that describe the manner an individual familiarizes to the world.

However these traits are different in each individual. It is at this point that individual difference is seen as a unique disposition: it is a personality trait for an individual to persevere in the face of difficulties, to a degree that doggedness aids the person to overhaul those challenges, this is based on the researcher's opinion that individual's exhibit 'FHS' in relation to their personality types which are; extraversion, conscientiousness, neuroticism, openness to experience, agreeableness. Extraversion personality traits orient an individual to be outward, highly interactive with the environment (Nwankwo & Kemjika, 1999). People high in extraversion are affectionate, talkative and noisy while others low in extraversion are reserved, loners and quiet.

McCrae and Costa in Schultz and Schultz (2005) explained that conscientious individuals are hardworking, ambitious, and energetic. He or she perseveres in the face of problems. He tends to be more cautious and through opposite of conscientious is undirected (McCrae & Costa, 1987). People high in neuroticism exhibit enhanced action in brain areas that regulate the compassionate branch of the autonomic nervous system. Negative emotions appear to be the hallmark of neuroticism. These individuals are worrisome, insecure, self-conscious, temperamental and anxious. This has effect on them as they appear to be emotionally unstable. Eysenck opined that dissimilarities in biological reactivity on the neuroticism dimension are inborn (Schutz & Schutz, 2005). McCrae and Costa in Schultz and Schultz (2005) explained that individuals who exhibit honesty are unique, self-governing, imaginative as well as bold while agreeableness represents cheerful, tender, believing plus polite personality. An agreeable somebody tends to be understanding, cooperative, believing plus interpersonally helpful. It is in extreme form that agreeableness turns into unattractive plus may be established in a reliant, modest fashion of dealing with other people; the opposite of agreeableness is resentment.

From the foregoing therefore, the present researchers envisaged that an individual's personality trait may be related to gambling behavior. For instance, Makinon, Lambe, Stewart (2015) studied the associations of five factor personality domains to gambling motives in developing grownup gamblers in Halifax, Canada. The study adopted the experimental research design Data was collected using two instruments namely; Neo-five factor inventory and gambling motives questionnaire. A sample of 679 adults participants were drawn from the general population using random sampling techniques through participant referrals, survey recruiting, playing advertisement on video lottery terminal (VLT) sites, post-secondary institution and casino recruiting with adult age of 18- 19years old. The study found out that the five factor model of personality (FFM), which are Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, Emotional stability and Openness to Experience help to reduce the incidence of guiding behavior among the youths.

A study by Mackinnon, Lambe, Stew (2008) identified three gambling motives which were; gambling to enhance positive emotion gambling to inhibit negative emotion and to increase social affiliation. The motives were correlated with the big five personality model. Data was analyzed using longitudinal structure equation modeling. The result of the study shows that extraversion and agreeableness predicted gambling for increase in social affiliation.

Eboh (2015) studied the occurrence as well as determinant of gambling behavior amid undergraduate scholars, using a case study of federal university of Oye-Ekti. Non-random sampling procedure stood espoused to constitute the sample size of one hundred and thirty (130) undergraduates drawn from different faculties. The study found out that 67.5% of the population of students in federal university of Oye-Ekti engaged in gambling activities in which 82.7% of the population are male while 14.3% are female.

Favored (2012) studied personality types as correlates of 'FHS' amid adolescent in rivers state (R/S). The study espoused the correlational research design, Five research questions and five hypothesis tested at 0.5 level of significant guided the study. A sample of 986 students in public secondary school was drawn from the population of 25,000 using SRST. Two instruments explicitly; personality inventory for adolescent (PIA) as well as adolescents 'FHS' inventory (AFSHI). The instruments remained validated by specialists in relevant fields. The reliability coefficients stood proven via test retest approach with Pearson product moment correlation (PPMC) with reliability of 0.87 and 0.81 for PIA as well as AFSHI respectively. The data generated stood analyzed by means of PPMC and z-test. The study found extraversion, conscientiousness, neuroticism, openness and agreeableness- to have significant positive relationship with false hope syndrome. Rosemary and Golda (2015) studied the relationship between extraversion in addition to scrupulousness as correlate of 'FHS' amid secondary school adolescent in R/S. A sample of 986 adolescents was drawn from a population of 25,000 through SRST, two instruments stood espoused for data assemblage specifically; PIA and adolescent 'FHS' inventory (AFSHI). The instrument was self-structured and validated. The reliability coefficient was proven by means of test retest scheme via PPMC and z-test. The finding of the study displayed that extraversion as well as conscientiousness had substantial optimistic linkage with false hope and it was summarized that extraverted as well as conscientious adolescent scholars are probably to become sufferers of 'FHS'.

The fact that gambling centers located in the university providence are on the increase with desperate undergraduates yet with repeated failures, loss and entangled debts, they still persist despite the consequences. This was the rationale behind this study to investigate the personality factors as a correlate of gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates in University of Port Harcourt.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The addictive habit of gambling with its negative consequences is increasing through false hope syndrome. This has become an issue of concern to psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists, teachers, parents and guardians because students are the assets of the nation, heir to generation to come and their dreams, goals and achievement are being robbed and squashed.

Gambling creates undesirable outcomes in an undergraduate's monetary, social as well as mental health, it is characterized by many psychological problems such as depression, frustration, mood swing, suicidal thoughts, emotional trauma and financial problems. These aggravated problems can render the victim into exhibiting certain anti-social behaviors such as lying, stealing, and robbing all with the intention of getting money to fuel their addiction. However the emotional tantrum can affect an undergraduate study habit, academic performance and state of mind to be disposed to excel in flying colors. In view of this, the researchers were motivated to carry out a study to investigate the correlation between undergraduates' personality factors and gambling false hope syndrome.

### **Aim and Objectives**

The foremost drive of this study is to explore the personality factor as correlates of gambling 'FHS' amid undergraduates. Explicitly, this study sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. Investigate the relationship amid extraversion and gambling 'FHS' amid undergraduates

2. Examine the relationship amid conscientiousness and gambling 'FHS' amid undergraduates
3. Ascertain the relationship amid neuroticism and gambling 'FHS' amid undergraduates.
4. Find the relationship between openness to experience and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates
5. Determine the relationship amid agreeableness and gambling 'FHS' amid undergraduates

### Research Questions

The following research question will guide the investigation of this study;

1. What is the relationship amid extraversion and gambling 'FHS' amid undergraduates?
- 2: What is the relationship amid conscientiousness and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates?
3. What is the relationship amid neuroticism and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates?
4. What is the relationship between openness to experience and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates?
5. What is the relationship amid agreeableness and gambling 'FHS' amid undergraduates?

### Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance,

1. There is no significant relationship amid extraversion and gambling 'FHS' amid undergraduates?
2. There is no significant relationship amid conscientiousness and gambling 'FHS' amid undergraduates?
3. There is no significant relationship amid neuroticism and gambling 'FHS' amid undergraduates?
- 4 There is no significant relationship amid openness to experience and gambling 'FHS' amid undergraduates?
5. There is no significant relationship amid agreeableness and gambling 'FHS' amid undergraduates?

### Research Methodology

Correlational research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study was made up of all students drawn from the Education, faculty in the university. The sample of this study was 550 students in the University of Port Harcourt. The sample size was drawn using 'SRST via balloting. This method gave all the students equal opportunities to be selected for the study

Two instruments remained espoused assemblage of facts for the study. The 'FHS' which has 10 items and Psychological Traits in Gambling (PTG) framed by the researcher stood espoused to collect data on false hope and personality disposition to gambling. The personality traits instrument has 40 items. The instrument is divided into three sections; A, B & C.

The instrument was constructed on a six point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Slightly Agree (SLA), Agree (A), Strongly Disagree (SD), Slightly Disagree (SD), and Disagree (D). The validity of the research instrument stood examined by two other specialists in test and measurement in the Department of Educational Psychology. Reliability of the instrument was done using the test retest technique. The test was administered twice to 30 undergraduate students who were not part of the sample. The PPMC was used to determine the reliability of the instrument.

### Results and Discussion

**Research Question One:** What is the relationship between extraversion and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates?

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant relationship between extraversion and gambling 'FHS' amid undergraduates. To answer research question one, PPMC was espoused while z-test was used to test the corresponding null hypothesis.

**Table 1:** The PPMC on relationship between extraversion and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates

		Extraversion	False Hope Syndrome	Decision
Extraversion	Pearson Correlation sig (2 tailed) N	1 550	0.797 0.000 550	Reject Ho1 (P<0.05)
False Hope Syndrome	Pearson Correlation Sig (2 tailed) N	0.797 0.000 550	1 550	

From table 1 above, it can be seen that the relationship amid extraversion personality trait and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates yielded coefficient value of 0.795. Further analysis shows that the obtained p-value of 0.000 was lower compared to the chosen alpha of 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected while alternate hypothesis was accepted.

**Research Question Two:** What is the relationship between conscientiousness and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates?

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant relationship between conscientiousness and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates.

**Table 2:** The PPMC on relationship between conscientiousness and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates

		Extraversion	False Hope Syndrome	Decision
Conscientiousness	Pearson Correlation sig (2 tailed) N	1 550	0.797 0.000 550	Reject Ho2 (P<0.05)
False Hope Syndrome	Pearson Correlation Sig (2 tailed) N	0.797 0.000 550	1 550	

From table 2 above, it can be seen that relationship amid conscientiousness and gambling 'FHS' amid undergraduates yielded co-efficient value of 0.846. This shows a strong as well as optimistic relationship amid conscientiousness and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates. Further analysis shows that the obtained p-value of 0.000 remained lessened compared to the chosen alpha of 0.05. This consequently indicates existence of substantial relationship amid conscientiousness and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates in University of Port Harcourt.

**Research Question Three:** What is the relationship between neuroticism and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates?

**Hypothesis Three:** There is no significant relationship between neuroticism and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates.

**Table 3:** The PPMC on relationship between gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates

		Extraversion	False Hope Syndrome	Decision
Neuticism	Pearson Correlation sig (2 tailed) N	1 550	0.802 0.000 550	Reject Ho1 (P<0.05)
False Hope Syndrome	Pearson Correlation Sig (2 tailed) N	0.802 0.000 550	1 550	

From table 3 above, it can be seen that relationship between neuroticism and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates yielded co-efficient value of 0.802. This shows a strong affirmative relationship amid neuroticism and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates. Further analysis shows that the obtained p-value of 0.000 remained lessened to the chosen alpha of 0.05. This consequently indicates existence of substantial relationship amid neuroticism and gambling 'FHS' amid undergraduates in University of Port Harcourt.

**Research Question Four:** What is the relationship between 'openness and, gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates?

**Hypothesis Four:** There is no significant relationship between openness and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates.

**Table 4:** The PPMC on relationship between openness and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates  
Openness False Hope Decision Syndrome among undergraduates

		Extraversion	False Hope Syndrome	Decision
Openness	Pearson Correlation sig (2 tailed)	1	0.818 0.000 550	Reject Ho4 (P<0.05)
	N	550		
False Hope Syndrome	Pearson Correlation Sig (2 tailed)	0.818 0.000 550	1 550	
	N			

From table 4 above, it can be seen that relationship between openness and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates yielded co-efficient value of 0.818. This shows a robust constructive relationship amid openness and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates. Further analysis shows that the obtained p-value was less than the chosen alpha of 0.05. Therefore indicates an existence of substantial relationship amid openness and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates in University of Port Harcourt.

**Research Question Five:** What is the relationship between agreeableness and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates?

**Hypothesis Five:** There is no significant relationship between agreeableness and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates.

**Table 5:** The PPMC on relationship between agreeableness and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates

		Extraversion	False Hope Syndrome	Decision
Neuticism	Pearson Correlation sig (2 tailed)	1	0.551 0.000 550	Reject Ho5 (P<0.05)
	N	550		
False Hope Syndrome	Pearson Correlation Sig (2 tailed)	0.551 0.000 550	1 550	
	N			

From table 5 above, it can be seen that relationship between agreeableness and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates yielded co-efficient value of 0.551. This shows that there is a moderate positive relationship between agreeableness and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates. Further analysis shows that the obtained p-value of 0.000 was less than the chosen alpha of 0.05. This hence indicates an existence of major connection amid agreeableness and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates in University of Port Harcourt.

## Discussion of Findings

### Extraversion and False Rope Syndrome

The finding on this variable (extraversion) and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates in university of Port Harcourt revealed an existence of substantial relationship amid extraversion and 'FHS' in gambling behavior among undergraduates because P-value (0.000) was less than alpha level of 0.05. This finding is affirmed by Rosemary and Golda (2015) who studied on the relationship between extraversion and conscientiousness as correlate of 'FHS' among secondary school adolescent in R/S. The finding of the study showed that extraversion and conscientiousness had significant positive relationship with false hope and it was concluded that extraverted and conscientious adolescent students are likely to become victims of false hope syndrome.

### **Conscientiousness and 'FHS'**

The result of the analysis as it is indicated in table 2 shows that p-value (0.000) was greater than the chosen alpha level of 0.05. It is therefore concluded that there significant relationship between conscientiousness and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates in University of Port Harcourt. This finding is supported by Rosemary and Golda (2015) who studied on the relationship between extraversion and conscientiousness as correlate of 'FHS' among secondary school adolescent in R/S. The finding of the study showed that extraversion and conscientiousness had significant positive relationship with false hope and it was concluded that extraverted and conscientious adolescent students are likely to become victims of false hope syndrome.

### **Neuroticism and 'FHS'**

From table 4.3 above, it can be seen that relationship between neuroticism and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates yielded co-efficient value of 0.802. This shows that there is strong positive relationship between neuroticism and 'FHS' in gambling behavior among undergraduates. To ascertain if there is a significant relationship between neuroticism and 'FHS' in gambling behavior among undergraduates, the z-test conducted yielded a p-value of 0.000 at 548 degrees of freedom. From this analysis, it is clear that the obtained p-value was less than the chosen alpha of 0.05. This therefore indicates that there is significant relationship between neuroticism and gambling 'FHS' among undergraduates in University of Port Harcourt. This finding is deliberately and consciously, supported by an empirical work of Favored (2012) who studied personality types as correlate of 'FHS' among adolescent in R/S, the study found extraversion, conscientiousness, neuroticism, openness and agreeableness to have, significant positive relationship with false hope syndrome.

### **Openness and False Hope Syndrome**

From table 4.4 above, it can be seen that relationship between openness and 'FHS' in gambling behavior among undergraduates yielded co-efficient value of 0.818. This shows a strong affirmative relationship amid openness and 'FHS' in gambling behavior among undergraduates. To ascertain if substantial relationship existence amid openness and 'FHS' in gambling behavior amid undergraduates, the z-test conducted yielded a p-value of 0.000 at 548 degrees of freedom. From this analysis, it is clear that the obtained p-value was less than the chosen alpha of 0.05. This therefore designates the existence of significant amid openness and 'FHS' in gambling behavior amid undergraduates in University of Port Harcourt. This current outcome is supported by Favored (2012) who studied personality types as correlates of 'FHS' amid adolescents in R/S, the study found extraversion, conscientiousness, neuroticism, openness and agreeableness to have significant positive relationship with false hope syndrome,

### **Agreeableness and 'FHS'**

The test conducted for hypothesis five revealed an existence of significant relationship amid agreeableness and 'FHS' in gambling behavior amongst undergraduates. This finding is supported by Maekinnon, Lambe, Stewart (2008) who identified three gambling motives which were; gambling to enhance positive emotion, gambling to inhibit negative emotion and to increase social affiliation, the result of the study shows that extraversion and agreeableness predicted gambling for increase in social affiliation. In the same vein, Favored (2012) who studied personality types as correlate of 'FHS' amid adolescent in R/S, the study found extraversion, conscientiousness, neuroticism, openness and agreeableness to have significant positive relationship with 'FHS' is also in support of this recent finding.

## Recommendations

Based on the results, the following recommendations were made:

1. Tertiary institutions should provide personality inventories to screen and detect personality traits that are vulnerable to this addiction and provide counseling service for them.
2. Tertiary administrators should implement policies that will restrict financial problems of students gambling with their school fees, and other levies by so doing, students will find it difficult to indulge in this habit.
3. Parents proper monitoring of their children is required to curb this spreading menace in the life of undergraduate, this will stop wastage of their resources.
4. Teachers, social workers and counselors should organize campaign aimed at exposing the consequences of gambling habit to the public.
5. Professional guidance counselors should assist students who are living in a world of fantasy to recover to face reality. They should ensure follow-up of those clients to ensure that the habit is on decrease.

## Conclusion

This study, the extraversion and gambling false hope syndrome among undergraduates in University of Port Harcourt revealed an existence of a substantial relationship amid extraversion and 'FHS' in gambling amid undergraduates. The study also established that extraverted as well as conscientious adolescent students are probably to become sufferers of 'FHS'.

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