

**ROLE OF THE LEARNED HELPLESSNESS IN DIMINISHING THE PRECISION OF JUMP SHOOTING FOR YOUNG BASKETBALL PLAYERS****Saleemah Abdullah Alwan\*****Assistant Professor at College of Arts, Studios Activities Unit, University of Baghdad, Iraq****Abstract**

This study aims to (1) identify the level of learned helplessness among young basketball players, and (2) identify the relationship, contribution, and influence of learned helplessness on precision of jump shooting for them. The researcher hypothesized that there is a significant correlation with the learned helplessness that slopes down, contributes, and adversely influences the precision of jump shooting among young basketball players. A descriptive correlational design was used to guide this study. The study includes a purposive sample of 62 young basketball players who continue their trainings to participate in the 2020-2021 sport season. The study sample represents 86.111% of the original population. The Learned Helplessness Scale (Seligman) was used. After verifying its scientific foundations and test the precision of the jump shooting from the front to the left of the free throw line, then moving semi-circularly to the middle and right, and then applied the two measuring tools to this sample.

**Keywords:** Learned Helplessness. Precision of Shooting. Basketball**INTRODUCCION**

Learned Helplessness is defined as a problem related to motivation, as a person may fail in one or more tasks in the past, which make him/her believe that he/she is unable to do anything until he/she improves his/her performance in those tasks. This feeling may accompany him/her in all stages of his/her life if this phenomenon is not addressed in an appropriate way. It will generate a feeling of his/her inability to control his/her environment, which will impede his/her practice in other situations of his/her life. Consequently, this misconception about oneself leads to the conviction that no matter how much he/she tries to change the failure situations he/she has been exposed to in previous stages, he/she will not succeed because he/she is unable to make any improvements or changes in them. These false cognitive accumulations that the individual has built up about himself will formulate an emotional perceptual state, which is termed the state of learned helplessness (Sameer et al., 2021). It is also known as a psychological condition in which there are three basic types of disorders: a cognitive disorder that appears in the impairment of the individual's ability to learn from previous experiences; a motivational disorder that characterized by a decrease in the individual's motivation to try to control events, which leads him/her to surrender to failure, negativity, and a weak desire to try again to do any action that achieves or approaches the goal; and an emotional disorder that is represented by negative emotions such as anxiety and anger, and there may be indications of depression as a result of his/her low ability to control events (Seligman, 2009).

It is also known as "a state of reduced persistence and lack of control in facing conflicts and stressful situations, in addition to the expectation of failure to control them continuously" (Ashour, 2014). It is also defined as "a type of surrender issued in response to the problems and frustrations that the individual constantly faces, which

Manuscrito recibido: 01/09/2021

Manuscrito aceptado: 21/10/2021

\*Corresponding Author: Saleemah Abdullah Alwan,  
Assistant Professor at College of Arts, Studios Activities  
Unit, University of Baghdad, Iraq

Correo-e: salemaalsultany@coart.uobaghdad.edu.iq

makes him/her feel negative, weak in strength, and the belief that what can be done will not produce the desired result" (Al-Harbi, 2014). As the helpless person does not even try to change the situation, as feelings of despair deplete him in undertaking any action that achieves or approaches the goal. Thus, it increases negativity and surrender to him/her, that is the start of the response weakens (Abu Halawa, 2008). That is, young people with high-pressure usually have in their confrontational responses in the form of negative adaptation, such as the practice of violence and the expectation of failure, surrender, and frustration which lead them to a state of feeling helpless.

With these data, the name of this condition is related to the reasons for which young people attribute their success or failure, as the main feature of learned helplessness is the individual's tendency to attribute his/her failure to himself/herself, and hence his/her self-esteem decreases (Gad, 2006). There are three basic types of learned helplessness, the first of which is personal disability which implies that individuals attribute uncontrolled events to themselves because they realize that there are other people who can control them. The disability that they experience is due to them only, and it is a relative disability, and that individuals with a personal learned disability feel a weakness in their self-esteem, so they are closer to a state of depression; and the global helplessness which is caused by events that are unavoidable or uncontrollable which are shared among people such as chronic diseases, wars, and fatalities. We can call this name external and uncontrolled sources of helplessness, and we can say that the shared helplessness is a usual helplessness; and the mobile helplessness where the results of research about learned helplessness reveal the existence of another type of helplessness, which is the helplessness transmitted from others through the unification of their experience and affection by it. In other words, the individual learns to be helpless from watching others. This is consistent with the theory of social learning by the American scientist Albert Bandura who believes that the individual learns through the process of imitation and simulation of what others behave. Thus, we can say that learned helplessness is spreadable (Al-Mughish, 2002).

The social environment has a prominent role in satisfying the individuals' needs and works to motivate them to learn behavior that achieves reinforcement for them or avoids punishment in the social context in which they interact (Abu Riach, 2007). Individuals depend on their psychological and physiological states in their evaluation of their capabilities or potentials, and tense reactions

can be interpreted as signs of weakness leading to poor performance. The feeling of fatigue and pain in activities that require strength and endurance can be interpreted as signs of poor self-efficacy, while a bad mood weakens it. So, the intensity of physical and emotional reactions is not the important factor, but what is important is how individuals perceive and interpret them in terms of having high or low self-beliefs (Al-Zayat, 2001). Thus, causal attribution is a psychological phenomenon that allows young players to justify their failure or declining their level, which requires a psychological challenge from them to face the pressures and not use them as an excuse for a decline in the level. Especially, the level of precision of scoring in basketball which determines the level of their clubs and influences their local ranking which qualify them for the external participations.

As the precision of motor performance in sports activities requires a high degree of motor coordination. That is, the ability to show appropriate motor actions in certain circumstances based on previous motor experiences or mastered skills. In other words, the athlete's ability to kinetic act in facing different circumstances during performance (Abu Al-Ela, 2012) and that the kinetic linking process is through the athlete's ability to coordinate the partial movements of his/her body with each other in space and time, and the movement and performance of this coordination when confronting the competitor or using the tool (Hoffmann, 2012).

Through the academic work of the researcher in sports psychology, she is aware that the diagnosis of psychological phenomena cannot be predicted unless it is accompanied by an objective measurement that expresses the level of the phenomenon measured in quantitatively. The noticeable problem in the study is a weakness in the precision of shooting among the young players in Baghdad clubs. After deliberating with some of the players in a direct individual interview, it became clear to the researcher that their attribution to external factors that distanced them from themselves.

Due to the importance of the phenomenon of learned helplessness, the importance of the research problem lays in an attempt by the researcher to answer the following question: Does the learned helplessness has a role in the low level of precision of jump shooting among young basketball players? Thus, this study aims to (1) identify the level of learned helplessness among young basketball players, and (2) identify the relationship, contribution, and

influence of learned helplessness on precision of jump shooting for them. The researcher hypothesized that there is a statistically significant correlation for the learned helplessness that slopes down, contributes, and negatively influences the precision of jump shooting among young basketball players.

**Research Methodology**

**Study Design:**

A descriptive correlational design was used to guide this study.

**Sample and Sampling:**

The study includes a purposive sample of 62 young basketball players who continue their trainings to participate in the 2020-2021 sport season. The study sample represents 86.111% of the original population. A sample of 10 young players was used for the pilot study.

**Study Instrument:**

The Learned Helplessness Scale (Seligman) was used. This scale was translated into Arabic language by Thahir (2014) which includes 26 items that are measured on a 3-point Likert type scale. The total score of this scale ranges between (26-78) with a hypothetical mean of (52). A higher score indicates greater learned helplessness. After verifying its face validity which was greater than 80% agreement by the panel of experts (N = 15). Its reliability was tested on a pilot sample of 10 young basketball players using the split-half method. The Cronbach's alpha is .879.

**Procedure:**

The test of precision of the jump shooting from the front to the left of the free throw line, then moving semi-circularly to the middle and right (Al-Hakeem, 2004) with a total degree of 30 which is a reliable test to measure this targeted group. Thereafter, the researcher applied this scale on the final study sample of young basketball players (N = 62) who were selected from five sport clubs in Baghdad City.

**Statistical Analyses:**

Data were analyzed using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) for windows, version 25. The statistical measures of percent, arithmetic mean, standard deviation (Std. Dev.), Guttman coefficient, one-sample t-test, linear regression, contribution proportion, F-test for the fit model, and slope using linear regression test were used.

**Results and Discussion**

The results of Table (1) display that the level of the learned helplessness exceeded the hypothetical mean and that the level of young players in the jumping shooting precision test from the front to the left of the free throw line and then moving semi-circularly to the center and the right did not exceed half of the test score to give an indication of their weakness in this level.

The results of Table (2) demonstrate a high correlation and contribution to the learner's helplessness with the precision of jump shooting and in the inverse direction. The significance of this linear regression confirms the

results of Table (3) with the quality of fit and conformity to the regression model. As for the rest of the contribution of (0.196), the researcher attributes it to random, not studied factors. The results of Table (4) confirm the effect of learned helplessness with precision of jump shooting for the study subjects. The researcher attributes this result to the role of learned helplessness young basketball players made it as a reason behind why they were unable to experience weaknesses in the performance aspects related to the acquisition of spatial precision when shooting the ball and which requires rest for the nervous system from psychological pressures. As in cases of stress and psychological stress, the person tends to lose a level of precision, especially spatial precision, so that it is sometimes used as a clinical test for the state of rest of the nervous system. In fact, the learned helplessness is not considered an eraser for the motor memory that contains experiences. Rather, it stands in the way of obtaining information that supports these experiences to perfect the precision of shooting to generate a state of feeling of despair. Despair is a frustrating factor of motivation.

Considering that every movement behavior requires motivation, the learned helplessness in the end is a frustration for that motivation and its continuation means a damage to the skillful kinetic behavior of these young basketball players. Studies indicate that in the first research on human learned helplessness, participants display this manifestation in different types of experiences, learning to avoid loudness and various problem-solving tasks.

The learned helplessness model has been used to give meaning to a variety of failed adaptive behaviors (Mueller & Dweck, 2008). As the learned helplessness turns from a practice to a state that the individual lives when he/she realizes that the events or situations he/she is going through are occurring outside his/her control and no matter how much effort he/she exerts, the result of his/her attempts will fail. The matter does not stop at this point, but rather makes the individual reach a point of feeling oppressed through environmental demands in a failed experiment to achieve something he/she wants (Friend, 2009). The "learned helplessness is one of the strongest influences on demotivation" (Dickhauser & Reinhard, 2009).

Likewise, learned helplessness is not an inborn characteristic, rather a result of the painful situations that the individual is exposed to and experiences in his/her environment, which is matched by his/her readiness in how he/she deals with it and then becomes a state that is acquired (Jamil, 2009), and that the player's good psychological state makes him/her more able to convert negative thoughts into positive ones, as he/she remembers the events, pleasant emotions that he/she had during his success in a job that affect his/her competitive behavior in a positive way.

Conversely, a bad psychological state reminds him/her of the negative and failed events and emotions he/she experienced which in turn will negatively affect his/her competitive behavior (Al-Gharyri, 2005). One of the best and easiest ways to build confidence is for the athlete to ensure that his/her performance is distinguished as thoughts, feelings, and behavior are affected by each other. The more confident you perform, the more confident you feel and think. This procedure is more important when the athlete begins to lose confidence and his/her opponent realizes this, which calls for confirmation of confidence through performance (Rabeaa, 2009).

**Table 1:** The levels of the two variables compared to the hypothetical mean.

Variables	Total score	Hypothetical mean	Mean	Std. Dev.	t	P-value	Significance
Learned Helplessness	78	52	55.4	4.643	5.772	0.000	Significant
Precision of shooting	30	15	13.94	2.253	3.72	0.000	Significant

Measurement unit = Degree, df = 61, Significance level = 0.05, Significant at p < 0.05

**Table 2:** Results of correlation coefficient, linear regression, contribution proportion, and standard error.

Influencing Variable	Influenced test	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Contribution proportion	Std. Error of estimation
Learned Helplessness	Precision of shooting	0.989	0.807	0.804	0.998

**Table 3:** F-test for model fit of the linear regression model.

Influencing Test	Influenced test	Variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean Squares	F	P-value	Significance
Learned Helplessness	Precision of shooting	Regression	250.033	1	250.033	251.25	.000	Significant
		Error	59.709	60	0.995			

Significance level = 0.05, N = 62, F is significant at p < 0.05

**Table 4:** Values of constant and slope.

Influenced test	Variables	β	Std. Error	t	P-value	Significance
Precision of shooting	Constant	38.095	1.529	24.908	.000	Significant
	Learned Helplessness	-0.436	0.028	15.851	.000	Significant

Significance level = 0.05, N = 62, t is significant at p < 0.05

A number of frustrating things must be avoided, including fear of failure, lack of support from the coach or management, or lack of fun, which leads to weakening the player's determination to continue training with the same intensity and enthusiasm (Yassin, 2009).

#### Conclusions:

Young basketball players have an increased level of learned helplessness to justify situations of declining precision of their jump shooting.

The increase in the level of learned helplessness contributes to a decrease in the precision of jump shooting among young basketball players, with a correlation that negatively affects them.

It is necessary to pay attention to avoid the phenomenon of learned helplessness and reduce it among basketball players and working to increase their sense of self-confidence and take responsibility for facing the various circumstances in which they encounter psychological stress that may affect their skill performance.

#### References

- Abu Al-Ula AA. Contemporary sport training. Cairo, Egypt, Dar Al-Fikr Al-Arabi, 2012, p.233.
- Abu Halaweh SM. A. (2008) Learned helplessness. College of Education, Alexandria University.
- Abu Rayash, H. M. (2007). Cognitive learning. Amman, Jordan, Dar Al-Maysera for Publishing and Distributing.
- Al-Ghurairi WT. Self-efficacy and its relationship with motivation for sport achievement and competitive behavior among handball premier and elite league in Iraq. A Doctoral Dissertation, University of Baghdad, College of Physical Education and Sport Science for Girls, 2005, p.115.
- Al-Hakeem AS. (2004). Test, measurements, and statistics in sport discipline. Al-Qadisiyah University, p.181.
- Al-Harbi SA, & Abdullah. (2014). School violence and its relationship with learned helplessness behaviors among female high school students at Al-Madina Al-Munawrah in the light of some variables. Journal of Teeba University for Educational Sciences. Vol. 9, Iss. 1, p.52.
- Allawi M. H, & Ratib O. K. (2017). Contemporary trends in scientific research for physical education and sport sciences. Cairo, Egypt, Dar Al-Fikr Al-Arabi, p.135.
- Al-Mazgheesh S. Learned helplessness among those with internal and external locus of control. A Master's Thesis, University of Algiers, 2002, p.18.
- Ashour, N. (2014). Learned helplessness and its relationship with academic failure. A Master's Thesis, Université Kasdi Merbah, College of Social and Human Science, p.23.
- Cemalcilar, Z., Canbeyli, R., & Sunar, D. (2003). Learned helplessness, therapy, and personality traits: An experimental study. The Journal of social psychology, 143(1), 65-81; Dickhäuser, O., & Reinhard, M. A. (2009). How need for cognition affects the formation of performance expectancies at school. Social Psychology of education, 12(3), 385-395;
- Hoffmann J. (2012). Lehrheft zum Lehrgebiet Allgemeine Theorien und Methodik des Trainings: Dersportliche Wettkampf. Leipzig, Deutsche Hochschule für Körperkultur. p. 66.
- Jad AM. (2006). Assertive behavior as a mediator in the relationship of psychological stress with depression and violence. Mansoura University, The first Scientific Conference of the College of Qualitative Education, , pp.400-445.
- Jameel R. S. (2009). Psychological health. 3rd ed. Amman, Jordan, Dar Al-Maysera for Publishing and Distributing, p.91.
- Mueller, C. M., & Dweck, C. S. (1998). Praise for intelligence can undermine children's motivation and performance. Journal of personality and social psychology, 75(1), 33;
- Sameer, A. H., Al-fartusie, A. S., & Shallal, A. A. (2020). The Contribution of Learned Helplessness to the Results of Some Evaluation Tests for the Athletes of the Talent Care Centers. Indian Journal of Public Health Research & Development, 11(3);
- Seligman M. E. (2009). The optimistic child: pocketbooks, New York, pp.18-33.
- Shihata RM. Personality measurement. 2nd ed. Amman, Jordan, Dar Al-Maysera, 2009, p.625.
- Siddeeq M. I. (2009). Feeling of psychological loneliness and learned helplessness attribution styles and future occupation for a sample of secondary school students in holy capital. A Master's Thesis, Um Al-Qura University, College of Education, p.22.
- Thahir, H. A. (2014). Ecological behavior in the adolescence stage and its relationship with the learned helplessness and future occupation. A Master's Thesis, Damascus University, College of Education, p.163.
- Yaseen R. Sport psychology. Amman, Jordan, Dar Osama for Publishing and Distribution, 2008, p.105.