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**COMPARATIVE INVESTIGATION OF MATHEMATICS ANXIETY AND
LEARNING MATHEMATICS BETWEEN MALES AND FEMALES
STUDENTS OF DISTANCE EDUCATION SYSTEMS**

Abstract:

Introduction: Mathematics anxiety is an important and common phenomenon in students from elementary through university levels. This anxiety may negatively affect person's attitudes and amount of time spent in math related activities. Mathematics anxiety is defined as a feelings tension and apprehension surrounding the manipulation of numbers and the solving of mathematical problems in academic, private and social settings (Richardson & Suinn, 1972). The research aimed to investigate mathematics anxiety and learning mathematics in male and female students of distance education system. Method: Participants (N=118 men and 127 women) were randomly selected from distance education university and responded to Plake & Parker mathematics anxiety rating scale _ revised (PPMARSR). PPMARSR assesses learning math anxiety and assessment math anxiety dimensions. Also Total scores of general mathematics were used to assess of learning mathematics. Results: Findings showed there are differences between male and female in math anxiety and learning mathematics. Males got more scores in assessment math anxiety than females, and also males got more scores in learning mathematics than females. Conclusion: Based on results, it is concluded that attention to gender differences is important in academic settings. Mathematics anxiety is an important and common phenomenon in students from elementary through university levels. Mathematics anxiety is more important factor in distance education system, because distance education system needs distance learning and usually without direct and face to face attendance of teacher. So, these systems should plan to increase positive attitudes towards mathematics, especially with attention to gender differences, in order to improve mathematics achievement and eliminate mathematics anxiety in educational settings.

Keywords:

mathematics anxiety, learning mathematics, distance education