

## Mathematics Anxiety: Overcoming Challenges and Achieving Success

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Doi: 10.23918/ijsses.v10i2p383

**Abstract:** Students of all ages struggle with mathematics anxiety, which hinders their ability to study and succeed in the subject. Math-related anxiety and dread can have a negative impact on academic performance and educational and professional chances. However, students may conquer their worries and adopt a positive attitude toward arithmetic by comprehending the nature of mathematics anxiety and putting successful solutions into practice. In order to help students, succeed in their mathematical endeavors, this essay examines the origins and consequences of mathematics anxiety and offers a variety of coping mechanisms.

**Keywords:** Mathematics, Anxiety, Challenges, Overcome, Success

### 1. Introduction

Students who struggle with math anxiety face challenges for a variety of reasons. Students' confidence and impression of their mathematical talents can be greatly impacted by previous unpleasant experiences, such as failures or reprimands (Serin, 2023). Anxiety and self-doubt can also result from having high expectations from parents, professors, or society to be an excellent math student. The emergence of mathematics anxiety can also be influenced by societal and cultural factors, such as gender stereotypes and the idea that math is a difficult subject. There are evidence that societal and cultural variables, such as gender stereotypes and the idea that math is a challenging topic, might have an impact on the onset of mathematics anxiety. Further explanations are provided below:

**Gender Stereotypes:** There have been several gender stereotypes linked with mathematics throughout history. These prejudices frequently present arithmetic as a subject best suited for males or boys, with women or girls being seen as less competent in this area. Because of these prejudices, it may be difficult for girls and women to feel appreciated or secure in their mathematical skills, which makes math more stressful for them.

**Cultural perceptions:** There is a pervasive notion that mathematics is an inherently challenging topic in various cultures. Social messaging, educational programs, and even media depictions may support this

Received: January 9, 2023

Accepted: February 26, 2023

Serin, H. (2023). Mathematics Anxiety: Overcoming Challenges and Achieving Success. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Educational Studies*, 10(2), 383-389.

notion. When people adopt this viewpoint as their own, they could approach arithmetic with trepidation or an expectation that they would struggle, which can exacerbate math anxiety. Educational Practices: Certain teaching methods and practices can inadvertently contribute to math anxiety. Students may feel under pressure, scrutinized, or afraid of making mistakes in a classroom setting that emphasizes competitiveness, timed exams, or a fixed mentality (the idea that mathematical talents are fixed and cannot be changed). These circumstances may increase anxiety levels and impede learning.

**Parental and Peer Influence:** A person's view of mathematics can also be influenced by the attitudes of their family and peers. Growing up in a setting where math is viewed as daunting or unimportant might cause a youngster to absorb these ideas and experience anxiety when confronted with math-related problems.

**Cumulative impacts:** When several socioeconomic and cultural elements interact, cumulative impacts may result. For instance, a cycle where people feel discouraged, nervous, and disengaged from mathematics can be created by the interaction of gender stereotypes, societal views of arithmetic difficulties, and educational methods that encourage anxiety.

It's crucial to remember that these elements are not deterministic and that people who receive the right help, have positive experiences, and study in a supportive setting can overcome their math phobia. We may lessen the negative effects of these societal and cultural influences on mathematics anxiety by supporting a growth attitude, challenging gender stereotypes, and advocating for inclusive education. Individual student attitudes and views about mathematics, such as the assumption that math is unimportant or challenging, might worsen anxiety. These components must be recognized in order to handle math anxiety effectively and reduce it.

## **2. Literature Review**

The impacts of math anxiety on students' academic performance and general well-being are extensive. Math-related anxiety and stress can impede conceptual understanding and decrease problem-solving abilities. Students may avoid math-related assignments or adopt a fixed attitude, thinking that their mathematical prowess is unalterable and fixed. Because of this, they are less ready to take chances and endure in the face of difficulties. In the long run, untreated mathematics anxiety can lead to fewer educational and employment prospects, which feeds the cycle of worry and underperformance. Understanding the negative impacts of mathematics anxiety emphasizes how crucial it is to put mechanisms in place to combat it. Untreated arithmetic anxiety can have serious long-term effects on a person's ability to pursue school and work. Here is an explanation of how it may fuel a loop of anxiety and poor performance and why it's so important to fight math's anxiety.

**Academic achievement:** Anxiety over mathematics can impair academic achievement in disciplines including mathematics. As a result of concern and dread, people who are anxious may find it challenging to concentrate, think clearly, and come up with effective solutions (Peixoto et al., 2016). This may result in poorer grades or a reluctance to enroll in more difficult math courses, so reducing the number of educational possibilities and prospective job pathways that call for a solid mathematical background.

**Limited Career Options:** Mathematical skills are highly recognized across numerous businesses in today's increasingly data-driven and technologically advanced world. Math proficiency is frequently required for careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines. There may be fewer work choices and lower earning potential if those who struggle with math anxiety choose not to pursue certain professional routes.

**Self-Efficacy and Confidence:** A person's self-efficacy and confidence in their mathematical ability can be damaged by mathematics anxiety (Pajares & Miller, 1995). People who constantly have difficulty comprehending arithmetic and feel anxious may come to believe that they are innately incapable of learning or succeeding in the subject. Their general confidence and desire to take on difficulties may be limited by this poor self-perception, which can also affect other aspects of their lives (Pajares, 1996).

**Cycle:** Mathematics anxiety can lead to a self-reinforcing cycle of anxiety and performance failure. People who are afraid of arithmetic may avoid tasks that include math, which results in less exposure and practice. The fear keeps reinforcing itself, making it harder to overcome, and there are less opportunities to practice and develop mathematical abilities.

Understanding the detrimental effects of mathematics anxiety makes it clear that putting strategies in place to prevent it is essential. Individuals can increase their confidence, adopt a positive attitude toward arithmetic, and sharpen their mathematical abilities with the use of strategies and programs geared at lowering mathematics fear. To disrupt the cycle of fear and underperformance, supportive learning settings, tailored treatments for anxiety management, and promotion of math as an inclusive and accessible subject can all be helpful. Individuals may unleash their potential, explore a wider range of educational and professional options, and contribute to their own and others' personal and professional progress when they receive the assistance and tools, they need to get over their math fear.

### **3. Strategies for Overcoming Mathematics Anxiety**

An effective strategy for overcoming arithmetic anxiety must consider its cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components. The following tips can assist kids in overcoming their arithmetic fear and developing a good connection with math:

Encourage students to adopt a growth mindset by helping them see obstacles as chances for personal development and education. Stress the value of work, tenacity, and persistence in the face of challenges. Teach kids with practice and useful techniques so that intellect and mathematics skills can be developed.

**Build a Strong Foundation:** By ensuring that students have a complete comprehension of fundamental ideas, you may provide them a strong foundation in mathematics. Students feel more secure and capable of solving more challenging mathematics problems when they have had a chance to review and reinforce their fundamental skills and knowledge. Provide extra help and resources for students who might be lacking in knowledge.

**Develop Effective Problem-Solving Techniques:** Teach students how to solve difficulties by breaking them down into simpler, more manageable stages. Encourage them to utilize visual tools to improve

understanding and problem-solving effectiveness, such as diagrams or graphs. Give students plenty of chances to practice and apply problem-solving techniques.

**Seek Assistance:** Create a welcoming learning atmosphere where students feel at ease asking questions and seeking assistance. To cultivate a feeling of community and shared learning, encourage peer cooperation and group projects. To handle problems and issues, offer specialized help and direction. Offer students who want extra help tutoring or mentorship services.

**Utilize Technology:** Include instructional technology to provide students more practice and engagement possibilities. Examples include interactive math software and internet resources. Technology may increase motivation, assist make abstract ideas more concrete, and accommodate various learning preferences (Plowman & McPake, 2013; Tiwari, 2023). Use online resources or applications that provide individualized learning opportunities.

**Promote Connections to the Real World:** To make mathematics more accessible and meaningful, emphasize how it is used in real-world situations. Develop an understanding of math's relevance and use by demonstrating how it is utilized in a variety of professions and businesses. Invite guest speakers from fields linked to math to discuss their experiences and provide examples of how math is used in the real world.

Implement techniques to reduce test anxiety, such as giving practice exams, teaching test-taking tactics, and giving students chances to prove their knowledge through alternate assessment methods. Establish a low-stress testing atmosphere that prioritizes learning and growth above grades alone.

#### **4. Creating an Environment that Supports Learning**

In order to lessen arithmetic anxiety, a helpful learning atmosphere must be created. Here are some essential strategies for creating a welcoming and good learning environment in the classroom:

A. **Stress Effort and advancement:** Acknowledge and praise students' efforts, development, and mathematical advancement. Give constructive criticism and encouragement that emphasizes improvement rather than grades. Promote a development mentality and emphasize the importance of tenacity and resiliency.

B. **Encourage student participation in the learning process by implementing student-centered teaching practices.** To accommodate various learning styles and interests, provide a range of educational approaches, such as practical exercises, group projects, and real-world applications. Give students the chance to individually explore and discover mathematical topics (Mercer & Sams, 2006).

C. **Encourage Collaboration and Peer Interaction:** Encourage a collaborative and interactive classroom atmosphere. Encourage your children to collaborate, talk about mathematical ideas, and encourage one another as they learn. By encouraging a friendly and inclusive learning environment, cooperative learning, group activities, and peer tutoring may foster a sense of camaraderie and lower anxiety.

D. **Promote inclusivity and diversity in the classroom by making sure that various viewpoints are valued, and that variety is celebrated.** Include a variety of mathematical illustrations and situations for solving

problems that consider the cultural and personal backgrounds of the students. This encourages diversity and enables students to relate arithmetic to their own experiences, making it more relevant and relatable. Encourage an inclusive setting where all kids feel appreciated and valued.

### **5. Managing Test and Assessment Anxiety in Mathematics**

For students, assessments and tests can be very stressful. Following are some methods to reduce anxiety and foster a more encouraging assessment environment:

A. **Set Clear Expectations:** Students should be informed in advance of the evaluation criteria, forms, and expectations. By removing uncertainty, a defined framework and set of rules can help reduce anxiety. By eliminating uncertainty, a clear structure and set of guidelines can aid in lowering anxiety. People may manage a situation more effectively when they have clear rules and a disciplined framework to follow. Because they give a sense of control and lessen the worry associated with the unknown, this clarity and predictability can relieve anxiety. Describe the objective of evaluations and underline that they are chances for development and learning.

B. **Provide Formative Assessments:** Throughout the learning process, use formative assessments to give students ongoing feedback and chances for development. This aids students in monitoring their development, identifying their areas of strength and weakness, and lowering their anxiety levels before important summative exams. Give students enlightening criticism that directs their study and makes ideas for development (Nabayra & Sagge, 2022). Giving students constructive criticism that gives recommendations for development and study guidance is referred to as enlightening critique. Enlightening criticism concentrates on recognizing areas of growth and providing specific suggestions for advancement rather than just pointing out errors or defects. This method enables students to evaluate their work, spot opportunities for development, and take initiative to advance their knowledge and abilities.

C. **Offer Students Timely and Constructive Feedback During the Assessment Process:** Provide Students with Formative Feedback and Support. The goals of formative feedback are to help students learn, recognize their strengths and areas for development, and lessen test-related stress. Encourage a growth attitude and continual improvement by placing more of an emphasis on growth and progress than just grades (Harackiewicz et al., 2012). We may promote a growth mindset and continuous development in students by emphasizing growth and progress rather than merely grades. The emphasis switches from rewarding the outcome, such as grades or test scores, to emphasizing the learning process and individual growth. This method advocates the belief that skills and intellect may be achieved by hard work, smart maneuvers, and perseverance. We encourage a positive attitude toward learning and inspire children to accept difficulties, persevere in the face of setbacks, and continuously strive for growth by recognizing and praising students' efforts, progress, and the lessons acquired from both achievements and mistakes.

### **6. Individualized Methods for Conquering Mathematics Anxiety**

Individualized help may be necessary for certain children to get over their math fear. Here are some distinctive strategies that may work:

A. Personalized Learning programs: For children who have a lot of arithmetic anxiety, create personalized learning programs. These methods can specify tactics and resources suited to the requirements of the learner, highlight specific areas of concern, and set precise targets. Regularly evaluate the plans and make changes in response to the student's development.

B. Counseling and Emotional Support: Provide referrals or counseling services to assist students who are experiencing extreme math anxiety. Trained experts may offer techniques to control anxiety, deal with underlying emotional issues, and increase self-assurance. Trained professionals may provide strategies to reduce anxiety, deal with underlying emotional problems, and increase confidence. They provide people practical coping skills to control anxiety symptoms, including deep breathing exercises or cognitive restructuring. Through treatment or counseling, they also assist in examining and addressing the primary reasons of anxiety, such as earlier experiences or unfavorable attitudes. Through this approach, people may boost their confidence and resilience to better navigate and deal with anxiety-provoking circumstances. To offer complete assistance to students, work with school counselors, psychologists, or therapists.

C. Parental Involvement: Share techniques, resources, and success reports with parents and guardians to help them understand how to deal with math phobia. Encourage parents to build a welcoming atmosphere in their homes, promote a good attitude toward arithmetic, and participate in math-related activities with their children. Parent collaboration and communication on a regular basis can support the educational tactics used.

## 7. Conclusion

Many students find that their fear of math is a substantial barrier to their academic success. Students may, however, overcome their anxieties and adopt a positive attitude toward arithmetic with the help of efficient tools and a friendly learning environment. Teachers may help children succeed in mathematics and reach their full potential by addressing the causes and consequences of mathematics anxiety, employing tailored strategies, and creating a supportive classroom environment.

Just keep in mind that conquering math fear is a long-term process that calls for cooperation from instructors, parents, and students themselves. It also demands patience, persistence, and these qualities. All students can benefit from mathematics in the future if we work together to make it more approachable and entertaining. We can assist children in overcoming their nervousness and succeeding in mathematics by putting these techniques into practice and cultivating a supportive environment.

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