

Mathematics Anxiety among Secondary Level Students in Nepal: Classroom Environment Perspective

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Abstract : This paper explores the association between the perceived classroom environment and mathematics learning and test anxiety among secondary level students in Nepal. Categorizing the students in three dominant variables- gender, ethnicity and previous schooling, and selecting sample students with respect to higher mathematics anxiety from five heterogeneous classes, the research explores disparities in student's mathematics cognition and reveals nexus between classroom environment and mathematics learning and test anxiety. This research incorporates social learning theory and social development theory as interpretive tool for analyzing themes through qualitative data. Focussing on the interviews with highly mathematics learning anxious students, the study sheds light on how mathematics anxiety among the targeted students is interlinked with multiple factors. The research basically exposes the students' lack of mathematical passion, their association with other students and participation in classroom learning, asymmetrical content and their lack of preparedness for the tests as caustic factors behind such anxieties. The study further reveals that students' lack of foundational knowledge and complexity of mathematical content have jointly contributed to mathematics anxiety. Admitting learning as a reciprocal experience, the study points out that the students' gender, ethnicity and disparities in previous schooling in the context of Nepal has very insignificant impact on students' mathematics anxiety. It finally recommends that the students who get trapped into the vicious cycle of mathematics anxiety require positive and supportive classroom environment along with inspiring comments/compliments and symmetrical course contents.

Keywords : anxiety, asymmetry, cognition, habitus, pedagogy, preparedness

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