THE POSSIBLE CAUSES AND PREVENTION FOR MATHEMATICS ANXIETY

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According to Nuffield Foundation, Mathematics Anxiety is a negative emotional reaction to mathematics that can be debilitating. It has been defined as “a feeling of tension and anxiety that interferes with the manipulation of numbers and the solving of mathematical problems in … ordinary life and academic situations. The severity of Mathematics Anxiety can range from a feeling of mild tension all the way to experiencing a strong fear of Mathematics. Mathematics anxiety is feeling of tension and anxiety that interfere with the manipulation of numbers and the solving of mathematical problems in a wide variety of ordinary life and academic situations. Anxiety in Mathematics can give an effect to anyone to forget and even lose their self-confidence. (Tobias, 1993)

Articles and researchers confirm that there are many possible causes of math anxiety; students are afraid with their math teacher, and most of the time, math teachers are terrors plus the factor that they consider that math is not an easy subject. Another reason is that learners don’t love math because they cannot see the connection to their real-life, so, why do they need to study the said subject. Also, students still have their bad experiences in math from their early years.

Students tend to get frightened the subject because of how the teacher imposed his authority in class, plus math is not an easy subject for many due to its time deadlines, did not understand the process of math. Phillips (2015) said that imposed authority, public exposure and time deadlines are the three practices in regular part of traditional teaching in mathematics that really leads to many students in anxiety. Although the said reasons are reasonable to have anxiety, it also needs to consider why students cannot see the
connection of math in their real-life. Consequently, there should be an evaluation of the teaching strategy in teaching math. Imposing the authority but still, students will love to learn math and see its connection to their daily life. Teachers should design a method that will make the students feel more successful and they can tolerate the level of failure in the subject. Phillips (2015) also said that there should be more emphasis on methods of teaching which include less lecture, more directed classes, and more discussion. Cooperative group works provide the students to have the exchange of their own ideas, they will not be afraid to ask questions and clarify information from their classmates, and they can even express their feelings about their learning. Those skills can be acquired from their early years. It is possible that if in early years, students experience cooperative work it will be lessened to have bad experiences in their early years in school and learning.

In conclusion, mathematics anxieties really exist and teachers have a big part in students’ learning. Phillips (2015) said that much of this anxiety happens in the classroom due to the lack of consideration of different learning styles of students. It is really important to consider the classroom strategies to be used in each class and in every student. Students have their different experiences and different types of learning. By doing so, students will enjoy math and see it as a fun subject to be learned of, and Phillips (2015) also said that the joy of mathematics could remain with them throughout the rest of their lives if they will see it enjoyable and fun.

References:
