Relationship of Language Learning Anxiety with Teacher and Peer Support

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Abstract

The major objective of this study was to examine the relationship between English language learning anxiety and support (from teachers and peers) for Grade 9 students in a rural-based secondary school. A questionnaire consisting of three different scales (Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale [FLCAS], Teacher Support Scale and Peer Support Scale) was administered to 150 students (91 Female and 56 Male) selected from a population of 783 students through a stratified random sampling technique. Both descriptive statistics (frequency counts, means and standard deviations), and inferential statistics (Pearson Product Moment Correlation, and Fisher's Z transform) were applied to analyse the data. The results of the study revealed that majority of the students were found to be slightly anxious in all dimensions of the anxiety scale. However, fear of negative evaluation was identified as the most anxiety provoking source for the participants. Moreover, the participants rated the support they got from their peers and teachers favourably well. All anxiety sub-variables (i.e. communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, test anxiety, and general English classroom anxiety) had a significant negative relationship with teacher support and peer support, with the exception of test anxiety with peer support. The correlation coefficients also showed notable differences in the strength of relationship between language learning anxiety and the support for female and male students even though Fisher's Z transform did not confirm the significance of the differences. From the findings, it can be inferred that the students' anxiety can be lowered to a certain extent by enhancing teacher and peer support in the cooperative learning environment so that students can be encouraged to enhance their confidence and self-esteemed in language classes.

Keywords: foreign language learning anxiety, peer support, teacher support

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Introduction

In the last four decades, a great deal of research has been undertaken on foreign language [FL] learning anxiety. Numerous early studies (e.g., Aida, 1994; Horwitz, 1986; Macintyre & Gardner, 1994; Price, 1991; Young, 1991) as well as recent studies (e.g., Chan & Wu, 2004; Cheng et al., 1999; Jin & Dewaele, 2018; Liu, 2006; Rodríguez & Abreu, 2003; Wei, 2007; Wu, 2011; Yan & Horwitz, 2008) confirmed that most language learners experience a feeling of anxiety in the process of language learning and concluded that language courses are anxiety provoking by nature. Explicating this, Horwitz et al. (1986) stated that language classrooms are threatening in part because students are often required to communicate in front of their peers in an unfamiliar language and are often publicly evaluated while doing so.

In this line, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) defined language learning anxiety as the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language learning contexts. Thus, foreign language anxiety is more related to situation specific anxiety (anxiety in a well-defined situation) than trait anxiety (a personality trait) or state anxiety (an emotional state). The results of studies on language anxiety consistently reported that foreign language learning is often accompanied by a specific type of anxiety. Some researchers estimated that a large proportion of students as high as one-half of the language students (Campbell & Ortiz, 1991) and one-third to one-half of foreign language learners (Worde, 1998) feel anxious in a second/foreign language classroom. Cubuku (2008) also contends that students of all levels of academic achievement and intellectual abilities are affected by anxiety occurring in varying degrees in language learning.

In terms of the relationship between gender and language anxiety, a large number of studies (Abu-Rabia, 2004; Arnaiz & Guillen, 2012; Elkhafaifi, 2005; Golchi, 2012; Jafarigohar & Behrooznia, 2012; Mesri, 2012; Muhaisen & Al-Abed Al-Haq, 2012; Naghadeh et al., 2014) confirmed that male students experience significantly less anxiety than female students do in learning English as a second or foreign language while a few studies found no significant effect of gender on students' anxiety (Matsuda & Gobel, 2004).Scholars attribute such conflicting findings to differences in cultural setting where the classroom practice is characterized. According to Horwitz (2001), some practice perceived by one group of learners as comfortable may prove stressful for learners from a different cultural group, who are used to different types of classroom organization.

In response to the effect of language learning anxiety, Horwitz (2008) suggested that language teachers reduce the anxiety level of language learners by helping learners recognize their own discomfort and establish reasonable and achievable expectations of language learning. Teacher support, which is one important measure of teacher effectiveness in secondary school (Hallinan, 2008), is the extent to which students believe that they can rely on their teachers for assistance in relation to academic interest. In line with this, researchers confirmed that students tend to engage more actively and make a greater effort in their academic work when they

perceive that they are emotionally supported by their teachers (Goodenow, 1993; Jin, de Bot, & Keijzer, 2015; Jin & Dewaele, 2018; Piechurska-Kuciel, 2011; Wentzel, 1994).

In addition, peers play an important role in second/foreign language learning because learners spend considerable time with their peers and share similar language difficulties. In such a way, the support and pressure from peer groups can determine the level of their anxiety in academic performance as the language learners feel less anxious when they perceive that they obtain more support from their peers.

Wang and Eccles (2013) assert that social support from teachers and peers may counteract against student learning anxiety as interactions with teachers and peers support young adolescents' academic motivation and classroom engagement. Cooperative learning, which is characterized by support from teachers and peers, is believed to provide a good environment in which the students can be engaged in school life and have a good relation by helping and interacting with others.

The 1994 education and training policy of Ethiopia (MOE, 1994) introduced a shift from teacher-centred methods to learner-centred methods, along which cooperative learning came into play in school instructions in general and in EFL classes in particular. Cooperative learning is used as a strategy to develop healthy interaction skills and to promote success of the individual student and group members (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). Cognizant of this assumption, the Ethiopian education system has kept cooperative learning in place. Now its implementation is under way; group work, group assignments and group discussions are now ubiquitous in almost all schools. It is assumed that such group learning method has great potential for the students not only to interact freely while learning together but also to promote work motivation and engagement in the class. Cooperative learning helps to minimize students' classroom anxiety because it provides a context whereby both teacher support and peer support serve as social resources to help students construct their own personal motivational resources by promoting positive self-perceptions of relatedness, competence and autonomy as Skinner and Pitzer (2012) suggested.

In other words, the teacher and peer support perceived in the cooperative learning is likely to reduce the foreign language learning anxiety. The student-teacher and student-peer relationships should inherently include self-sustaining engagement in high-quality teaching and learning, characterized by focused enthusiastic hard work and constructive responses to obstacles and setbacks. In line with this, Chang (2009) believes that relationships generate mutual satisfaction and success by contributing to teachers' and students' experiences of relatedness to their social partners in the classroom, to their competence as teachers and learners, and to ownership of the goals of creating a caring learning community dedicated to important academic work.

Problem Statement

Horwitz (2001) claims that classroom atmosphere and teacher support are among the factors that influence students' anxiety levels under instructional conditions. In line with this, the literature (e.g., Alessandri et al., 2012; Elkhafaifi, 2005; Jin, de Bot, & Keijzer, 2015; Jin & Dewaele, 2018; Piechurska-Kuciel, 2011; Palacios, 1998) shows that learners' perceived teacher support and peer support are negatively associated with language anxiety. Because the cooperative learning context is thought to provide a safe and welcoming classroom environment, students are likely to feel comfortable participating in class and their teachers are likely to play a facilitator's role to a greater extent in the supportive learning environment.

Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that teacher and peer support prevailing in the cooperative learning classes helps reduce FL classroom anxiety. However, there are few studies investigating how teacher and peer support in cooperative learning relates with secondary school English language learning anxiety particularly in Ethiopia. Most of the local studies (e.g., Abate, 1996; Messele, 2007, Tesfaye, 2010) investigated language learning anxiety in relation to achievement. Given that Grade 9 students are new to the secondary level and that strong cultural influences are likely to persist in rural-based schools like Kunzila, it is important to examine the relationship between foreign language anxiety and teacher and peer support in terms of gender to see the role of teacher and peer support to minimizing the levels of foreign language learning anxiety. While trying to address this issue, it is also important to gauge the level of the foreign language anxiety the learners experience as well as the teacher and peer support they perceive in the current cooperative learning environment.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to determine the general anxiety level of Grade 9 students and whether there exists a significant negative relationship between foreign language learning anxiety and teacher and peer support in the selected school. The research questions addressed in this study are listed below:

1. What is the general anxiety level of Grade 9 students in English language classroom?
2. How do the students rate the teacher and peer support in English language classroom?
3. Is there a significant negative relationship between the level of foreign language learning anxiety and the level of teacher and peer support reported?
4. Is there a statistically significant difference in the strength of the correlation between anxiety and teacher and peer support for male and female students?

Method

Design

Since the researchers intended to examine learners' levels of anxiety and teacher and peer support in English language learning classroom and to explore the relationship among these variables, with no manipulation of the variables, a survey research method was used to collect data and a correlational analysis was employed to answer the research questions.

Research setting

This study was conducted in Kunzila General Secondary and Preparatory School, in a small rural town of Kunzila. Situated on the south west shore of Lake Tana, the town is 75 kms far from Bahir Dar, the capital of Amhara National Regional State in Ethiopia.

Sample

The target population of the study was Grade 9 students of Kunzilla General Secondary and Preparatory School, which had 13 sections consisting of 783 students (male=308 and Female=475) in 2018/19 academic year. To determine the sample size, Moser and Kolton's (1977) formula was applied by setting the acceptable error margin at 4% and the population proportion 50%. Accordingly, the computed sample size (n = 156) was determined to be taken, without running the further analysis of finite population correction (*fpc*) because the sample size (n=156) was not too large for data collection and analysis. Then, using the class register of each section as a sampling frame and taking gender into account, the researchers employed a stratified random sampling technique to keep the proportion of the gender composition, so 61 male (150/783*308) and 95 female (156/783*475) students were selected. Though the questionnaire was distributed to the sampled 156 participants, the responses obtained from 150 participants were processed in this study because six students (two male and four female) did not respond to the questionnaire in a proper way. The age of the students ranged from 14 to 17 years old with an a mean age of 15.6.

Instrument

A questionnaire consisting of four parts was the only instrument used for this study. The first part was intended to collect personal data of the participants. The second part was foreign language classroom anxiety scale (FLCAS) which was designed by Horwitz et al. (1986) and confirmed to be a highly reliable instrument to measure anxiety level of students by many researchers (e.g., Aida, 1994; Horwitz, 1986; Huang, Eslami & Hu, 2010; Rodriguez & Abreu, 2003). This scale consisted of 33 five-point items (*a* = .86) constituting four sub-scales: communication apprehension (eight items, *a* = .75); fear of negative evaluation (nine items, *a* = .81); test anxiety (five items, *a* = .71) and anxiety of English classes (11 items, *a* = .83). The third and the fourth part consisted of eight items each rated on a five-point scale about teacher

support ($a = .76$) and peer support ($a = .78$) adapted from Classroom Life Scale developed by Johnson and Johnson (1983).

The participants were made to respond to each item with options ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree". Each response was associated with a point value, where a five-point value was assigned to "Strongly Agree" and a one-point value, to "Strongly Disagree". Negatively worded items were reversely coded so that higher scores on the scale would indicate higher level of language learning anxiety and a higher level of perceived teacher and peer support. Prior to administering the questionnaire, the questionnaire was translated into Amharic, the students' mother tongue, and pilot tested on fifteen Grade 9 students to check the accuracy of the translation. Having administered the questionnaire to the respondents, the researchers ran a reliability test (using Cronbach Alpha on SPSS 20 software) to estimate the internal consistency of the scales. As their reliability indices shown along with each scale and sub-scale above suggested that the items in the questionnaire were highly consistent in measuring the designated constructs and sub-constructs.

Data Analysis Method

To prepare data for analysis, the summated rating method was used in scoring the tools. This means composites for the scales and sub-scales were produced by adding up scores on relevant anxiety and social support items on the questionnaire and dividing the totals by the total number of items. This method was applied to control for error effects due to a participant's random selection of responses (Schmidt & Hunter, 1999). Then, the data analysis began with descriptive statistics (frequency counts, means and standard deviations) to show the sample population's language learning anxiety level and perceived level of teacher and peer support. Next, exploratory data analysis was conducted to determine the possibility of applying the inferential statistics. Accordingly, the exploratory data analysis proved that the data did not have any problem of normal distribution, linearity, and outliers. Then, Pearson's product moment correlation was used to analyse the correlation between English learning classroom anxiety and peer and teacher support. Finally, to find out whether the correlations for the male and female groups were significantly different in strength, the researchers converted the *r* values into Fisher's *z* scores and calculated *z observed* values to see whether or not the Z_{obs} values would fall within or outside the boundary of -1.96 and +1.96.

Ethical consideration

As one of the researchers was working in the school, he approached the school principal formally by showing letters to get access to the participants. Furthermore, this researcher explained the purpose and possible outcomes of the study to the participants, before starting to collect data. The researcher also assured the participants about confidentiality of the information they would give by telling them that they must not write their names or identification numbers while filling in the questionnaire. Finally, the data collection commenced after the participants' informed consent was obtained.

Results

Level of students' anxiety in English classroom

In order to answer the first research question, the data collected through questionnaire were analysed using frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation to show the general level of students' anxiety. The results are presented in Table 1 follows.

Table 1

General situation of English language learning anxiety

Variables	Students' (N = 150) measure of Anxiety Mean (SD)	Students with anxiety score <3.00 (freq. & %)	Students with anxiety score ≥3.00 (freq. & %)
Communication Apprehension	3.32 (.72)	47 (31.33%)	103 (68.67%)
Test Anxiety	3.17 (.63)	44 (29.3%)	106 (70.7%)
Fear of Negative Evaluation	3.61 (.83)	56 (37.3%)	94 (62.7%)
General English Classroom Anxiety	3.25 (.59)	56 (37.3%)	94 (62.7%)
Overall FL Learning Anxiety	3.34 (.61)	53 (34.7%)	97 (65.3%)

Table 1 shows that the mean score anxiety level for the language learning anxiety variables communication apprehension, test anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, general anxiety of English classes and overall anxiety were 3.32, 3.17, 3.61, 3.25, and 3.34, respectively. All these mean scores indicate that the participants of this research in general were found to be a bit anxious because they scored above the expected mean score of 3.00 in each type of language learning anxiety variable on the one-to-five anxiety scale. When the mean scores of each of the anxiety variables were compared, fear of negative evaluation with the highest mean score (M=3.61, SD=.83) was found to be relatively the most serious source of anxiety for the study participants.

According to Howitz et al. (1986), students whose average score is close to 5.00 are rather anxious and those with average around 3.00 are considered slightly anxious, while others with average score below 3.00 are probably not anxious. Based on this classification, frequency counts were taken to identify students who scored below and above 3.00 on the anxiety scale. The figures, as shown in Table 1, indicate that almost two-third of the respondents (i.e., 62.7% to 70.7%) scored above the expected mean score 3.00 while the remaining almost one third (i.e., 29.3% to 37.3%) scored below the expected mean value 3.00. This means that a considerably large number of Grade 9 students in Kunzila Secondary and Preparatory School were slightly anxious in English classrooms.

Levels of teacher and peer support students perceived in the collaborative learning

The second research question was concerned with how students would rate the social support they received from teachers and peers in language class. Hence, the data gathered through questionnaire and analysed by using mean and standard deviation are presented below.

Table 2

Perceived Level of Classroom Support and Anxiety Level in Terms of Gender

Variables	Male (n = 59) Mean (SD)	Female (n=91) Mean (SD)	Total (N = 150) Mean (SD)
Perceived Teacher Support	3.90 (.40)	3.86(.41)	3.88 (.41)
Perceived Peer Support	3.46 (.61)	3.70 (.52)	3.61 (.57)
Communication Apprehension	3.26 (.72)	3.35 (.72)	3.32 (.72)
Test Anxiety	3.05 (.66)	3.25 (.60)	3.17 (.63)
Fear of Negative Evaluation	3.67 (.82)	3.57 (.84)	3.61 (.83)
General English Classroom Anxiety	3.24 (.66)	3.26 (.55)	3.25 (.59)
Overall FL Learning Anxiety	3.30 (.64)	3.35 (.59)	3.34 (.61)

As can be seen in Table 2, the participants rated the support that they received from their teachers and peers well above the expected mean value (3.00). The mean score of perceived teacher support was found to be 3.88 while the perceived peer support was 3.61. This indicates that they fairly positively perceived the classroom support, which can be considered a good level of support. However, the students perceived their teacher support a little better than their peer support in the cooperative English classroom. Comparing the perceived support in terms of gender, the mean scores show that the female students perceived their peers more supportive (M=3.70, SD=.52) than their male counterparts did (M=3.46, SD=.61), whereas the males perceived the teacher support (M=3.90, SD=.40) slightly higher than the females did (M=3.86, SD=.41).

The results in table 2 showed that girls scored a bit higher than boys in most of the anxiety variables, which suggested that girls were a bit more anxious than boys. Though it was not the primary concern of this paper, an independent sample t-test was run to examine the magnitude of the difference. However, the associated test result, t (148) = 1.115; p > .05, confirmed the difference was not significant at .05 alpha level.

In order to answer the third research question, the researchers applied Perason Product Moment correlation. The results are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Pearson Product Moment Correlation among Anxiety and Support Variables

Types of variables	Teacher Support (N=150)		Peer Support (N=150)	
	r	Sig. (1-tailed)	**r**	Sig. (1-tailed)
Communication apprehension	-.256[**]	.001	-.259[**]	.001
Fear of negative evaluation	-.283[**]	.000	-.340[**]	.000
Test anxiety	-.200[*]	.007	-.079	.170
General English Classroom anxiety	-.311[**]	.000	-.249[**]	.000
Overall Anxiety	-.298[**]	.000	-.272[**]	.000

**p < .01, one-tailed, *p < .05, one-tailed.

Here a directional (one-tailed) hypothesis test was applied because the negative correlation was expected from the outset based on theoretical and empirical support in the literature. As can be seen in Table 3 above, the results confirmed that teacher support negatively correlated with communication apprehension (r=-.256), fear of negative evaluation (r=-.283), test anxiety (r=-.200) and general English classroom anxiety (r=-.311) all of which were significant at .01 alpha level. The correlation between test anxiety and teacher support (r = -.20) was the lowest coefficient.

The table also depicts that peer support negatively correlated with communication apprehension (r=-.259), fear of negative evaluation (r=-.340), test anxiety (r=-.079) and general English classroom anxiety(r=-.249). All anxiety sub-variables but test anxiety had a significant negative correlation with peer support (r coefficients ranging from -.079 to -.341). The correlation between test anxiety and peer support (r = -.07) showed almost no relationship at all. With respect to the overall anxiety, it negatively correlated with teacher support (r=-.298) and with peer support (r = -.272). This means that it did have a negative significant relationship with support. These negative correlation coefficients reveal inverse relationships that suggest that the anxiety level is low when the teacher or peer support is high.

The relationships between foreign language learning anxiety and social support for male and female students

The other research objective of the present study was to assess whether there was a statistically significant difference in the strength of the correlation between anxiety and social support (Teacher and Peer Support) for male and female students. Hence, the dataset was split on a gender basis and the data were analysed using the same Pearson product moment correlation. The results are summarized and presented in the following table.

Table 4

Correlation of Anxiety Variables with Teacher and Peer Support for Female and Male Participants

	Teacher Support		Peer Support	
	r (Females, n=91)	r (Males, n=59)	r (Females, n=91)	r (Males, n=59)
Communication apprehension	-.189	-.256[**]	-.259[**]	-.356[**]
Fear of negative evaluation	-.187	-.283[**]	-.340[**]	-.447[**]
Test anxiety	-.164	-.200[*]	-.079	-.238
General English classroom anxiety	-.233[*]	-.311[**]	-.249[**]	-.417[**]
Overall Anxiety	-.218[*]	-.298[**]	-.272[**]	-.413[**]

**p < .01, one-tailed, *p < .05, one-tailed.

As can be observed in Table 4 above, the overall anxiety and the anxiety sub-variables (i.e., communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, general English classroom anxiety, and overall anxiety) all negatively correlated with teacher support for female students (r=-.189, r=-.187, r=-.164, r=.233, r=-.218, respectively) but only the last two were significant. On the other hand, these same anxiety variables had significant correlations with teacher support for male students (r=-.256, r=-283, r=-200, r=-.311, and r= -.298, respectively). As a result, the correlation coefficients for male participants were higher than those for female students.

Moreover, all anxiety variables except test anxiety had negative and significant relationship with peer support for female participants (with the Pearson r ranging from -.079 to -.340). Besides, all anxiety variables except test anxiety also had negative and significant relation with peer support for male participants (with the Pearson r ranging from -.238 to -.447). However, the correlation coefficients for male participants were still higher than those for female students.

The researchers followed the Fisher's *r to Z transformation* procedure to find out whether the correlations for the two groups are significantly different. The first step was to convert the *r* values into *Z* scores and the second step was to put these values into the following equation to calculate the observed value of Z (Z$_{obs}$ value):

$$Z\ obs = \frac{Z1 - Z2}{\sqrt{\frac{1}{n1-3} + \frac{1}{n2-3}}}$$

The last step of the procedure was to determine the statistical significance of the obtained Z$_{obs}$ value based on whether it falls within or outside the boundary of -1.96 and +1.96. If the Z$_{obs}$ value obtained is between –1.96 and +1.96, it is concluded that there is no statistically significant difference between the two correlation coefficients. And conversely, it is said that there is a statistically significant difference between the two correlation coefficients when Z$_{obs}$ value obtained is outside these two boundaries. The values obtained were assessed using this set decision rule.

Table 5

The difference in strength of the correlations for male and female groups

Anxiety Variable	Teacher Support Z_{obs}	Peer Support Z_{obs}
Communication apprehension	-1.059	-1.053
Fear of negative evaluation	-1.708	-1.989*
Test anxiety	-0.444	-0.620
General anxiety	-1.210	-0.93
Overall Anxiety	-1.28	-1.287

*p < .05, two-tailed.

In Table 5 the figures are calculated z_{obs} values to determine the likelihood that the difference in the correlation noted between females and males is random. Accordingly, only one z_{obs} value, (Z_{obs} = -1.99, which is outside the specified bounds) was obtained, so it can be inferred that there is a statistically significant difference in the strength of the correlation between fear of negative evaluation and peer support for females and males. This means fear of negative evaluation explains significantly more of the variance in peer support for males than for females. However, though it is not significant, there was a difference in the strength of the correlation between the anxiety and social support for female and male participants.

Discussion

The descriptive statistics showed that majority of the study participants were moderately anxious. This result is consistent with the findings of some local studies (e.g., Abate, 1996; Melesse, 2007). Fear of negative evaluation was found to be the most serious anxiety type experienced by the students. This might be attributed to the fact that fear of negative evaluation derives mainly from both teachers and the student peers because the teacher's continual evaluation in English class may lead anxious students to be intensely susceptible to the evaluation of their peers as von Worde (2003) suggested. Though the study confirmed a non-significant difference between female and male participants in their anxiety level, it showed that female students had a slightly higher level of anxiety than males in the setting. This is a similar finding to Batumlu and Erden's (2007) and Onwuegbuzie et al. (1999) but different from Elkhafaifi (2005) and Pappamihiel (2001). Moreover, the study confirmed that great majority of the participants perceived their teachers and peers fairly well supportive.

The observed negative relationship of anxiety with teacher and peer support implies that the more the students felt the teacher and peer support, the less anxious they became. This finding supports Horwitz's argument that language teachers can help student feel less anxious or more comfortable when teacher support and understanding are meaningfully available. Abu-

Rabia (2004) also found that Grade 7 EFL learners' attitude towards teacher support negatively correlated with foreign language anxiety. Similarly, Goodenow (1993) and Wetzel (1994) also found out a significant negative correlation between English language learning anxiety and teacher and peer support. Huang, et al. (2010) also reported that teacher support was negatively correlated with speech anxiety and fear of negative evaluation as well as fear of failing the class.

The study also uncovered that, even though there was a notable difference in the strength of the correlations between anxiety and teacher and peer support for male and female students, the significant difference was observed only in the correlations between fear of negative evaluation and peer support. The anxiety variables explain reasonably more of the variance in teacher and peer support for males than for females. This might be attributed in part to the wider culture in the male-dominated Ethiopian society. Despite the recent efforts to change this deep-seated practice, in this society particularly in rural areas girls are socially expected to be decent enough to not to compete with boys in many respects.

Conclusions and Implications

The result of the study indicated that that majority of the students were found to be anxious, and fear of negative evaluation was the major source of anxiety the learners experienced. The present study also indicated that the perceived teacher support and peer support remained medium level. From the observed significant negative relationship of teacher support and peer support with anxiety variables, we can infer that, if the teacher and peer support increases, the students' anxiety can be lowered to a certain extent. The difference in the strength of the relationship between learning anxiety and social support for female and male students implies that there remains much work to help the female students tackle with anxiety variables.

Results of the present study have several important implications for organizing FL teaching and learning in secondary schools. This study revealed that a considerably large number of students are at risk of having debilitative levels of foreign language anxiety and it suggested the relative importance of perceived teacher and peer support for lowering learners' anxiety levels in the FL classroom. Thus, teachers should maximize the support they provide by creating a positive classroom environment characterized by solidarity, friendship, and mutual tolerance among classmates, so that learners can develop their confidence and self-esteem to safely participate in the FL classroom. Further attempts should be considered to organize cooperative learning in its various forms in order to enhance intimate inter-peer relationship through fostering interactions and collaboratively solving problems.

Limitations

The major limitation of this study is that an exploratory factor analysis should have been conducted to ensure the underlying constructs of the eight items each for teacher and peer support. These 16 items were taken and adapted from Johnson and Johnson's (1983) Classroom

Life Measure, which had a total of 91 items. Unlike FLCAS, this measure has not been extensively used in language research. Moreover, the data analysis was not extended to regression analysis; it was limited to correlational analysis. Further investigation should be made by overcoming the above limitations and by applying regression analysis to be able to clearly predict the amount of the contribution of teacher and peer support to lowering FL learning anxiety.

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