ANSWER TO TASK 3 LESSON 4

**Introduction**

The term multitasking refers to doing more than one task at the same time, for example talking on the phone while typing an assignment. Multitasking is common in everyday life, including when we are working, when we are studying, when we are communicating or even when we are just walking around.

2. Various research studies have identified many factors that can affect a person’s ability to multitask. Such factors range from pressure coming from a person’s environment, such as a coming deadline (Sarmento & Tsai, 2015), to more personal factors such as habits (Sanbonmatsu, Strayer, Medeiros-Ward, & Watson, 2013).

4. The purpose of our study was to investigate the relationship between gender and the ability to multitask in a sample of Hong Kong participants. Our hypothesis was that there is no statistically significant difference in the multitasking ability between the genders

**Methods**

6. First, a visual-visual experiment (Experiment A) was conducted to test the visual-visual multitasking ability of the participants. As each level of difficulty increased, additional mini-games were added to the screen to be played at the same time, with two or more games being controlled by each hand. Each participant was asked to play the games three times. All of the final scores in the games were recorded

1. Second, an experiment involving a task that required use of visual, auditory and verbal skills (Experiment B) was conducted. The participants were asked to complete an online word search on the topic “fruits”, while at the same time listening to and answering simple maths questions.

**Results**

5. On average, the males scored slightly higher on average than the females in Experiment A, while the females scored slightly higher on average in Experiment B. However, the differences were not found to be statistically significant

9. In Experiment A (visual-visual-motor), the average scores for males and females were 53.3 and 51.4 respectively. The scores of males ranged from 22.7 to 90.3 , while the scores for females ranged from 22 to 91.3, as shown in Figure One. Figure one also shows that scores for both males and females increased as more tries were completed.

8. In Experiment B (visual-auditory-verbal-motor task), the average scores for males and females were 22.35 and 23.47 respectively. The scores of males ranged from 16 to 28 , while the scores of females ranged from 16 to 29, as shown in Figure Two.

**Discussion**

10. The findings support our initial hypothesis that there is no statistically significant relationship between the multitasking ability of men and women. It challenges the findings of previous research which suggested that women are better at multitasking than men (Stoet, O'Connor, Conner, & Laws, 2013; Kuptsova, Ivanova, Petrushevskiy, Fedina, & Zhavoronkova, 2016) and confirms research that found no statistically significant difference between the performance of the two genders (Buser & Peter, 2012).

7. The increase in the participants’ performance in Experiment A as more tries were completed seems to indicate that with more practice, the multitasking ability of an individual can improve, regardless of gender. Other research similarly suggests that multitasking ability can be improved though training (Dux, Tombu, Harrison, Rogers, Tong, & Marois, 2009).

3. One limitation of our study is that we did not have a lot of information on the personal backgrounds of many of the participants. For example, factors such as whether the participants are frequent game players, or whether their field of study or work assists in their multitasking ability could have influenced their performance.

Conclusion

The findings of this study clearly suggest that, contrary to some previous research, there is no statistically significant relationship between the multitasking ability of men and women. However, further research could investigate a range of specific tasks that might show a gender difference in certain kinds of multitasking abilities.

MISSING: There should be info in the methods section on how many participants there were and how they were selected.