Research Article

SOCIAL ANXIETY DISORDER AND STUDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARD LEARNING IN UNIVERSITY OF BAMENDA, CAMEROON

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ABSTRACT

This study was on social anxiety disorder and it influence on the student's attitude toward learning in the University of Bamenda. Specifically, the study examined the extent to which fear of the unknown and shyness influence students' attitudes toward learning in the University of Bamenda. A cross sectional survey research design was used for this study. The sample size was 155 students selected from three faculties. The purposive sampling technique was used to select students who were suffering from social anxiety disorder. A questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. In data processing, a pre-designed EpiData Version 3.1 database which has in-built consistency and validation checks was used to enter the data. Further consistency, data range and validation checks was performed in SPSS version 21.0 to identify invalid codes. The data was analyzed using frequency counts, percentages and spearman rho test to establish the relationship between the social anxiety disorder and students' attitude toward learning. The findings of the study showed that there was a significant, moderate and positive relationship between fear of the unknown and student's attitude toward learning (P<0.001). Equally, there was a significant, strong and negative relationship between fear and attitude toward learning (P<0.001). The study concluded that social anxiety disorder proved to be a negative influence student's attitude toward learning in the University of Bamenda.

KEYWORDS

Social anxiety disorder, fear of the unknown, shyness, attitude toward learning.

INTRODUCTION

It is important to know the ways of learning, develop expectations and have no anxiety for learning in order to be successful. Learning to learn is being able to produce new knowledge for the new situations by

setting forth the available knowledge (Taşpınar, 2009). The effort of students made for learning is the most important way for them to reach knowledge. Because there is desire, openness, expectation, curiosity towards knowledge and meeting of needs in the nature of learners (Şimşek, 2007). University students obtain information by structuring it in the mind, not in an unrefined way and social anxiety disorder may prevent them from gaining such knowledge or making them to develop negative attitude toward it (Saban, 2000). Therefore, in the process of structuring information, being positive or negative of the way of accepting information, being open to learning or not, having high or low expectation levels and developed anxiety levels are all important factors. Extreme anxiety of the learners reduces their motivation levels, creates decrease in performance and thus it affects the self-confidence of individuals in a negative way (Senemoğlu, 2005)

The University period is important for the rapid maturation of the cognition, emotion and behavior of university students. Interpersonal communication is increasingly important to university students' studies, lives and employment. However, interpersonal communication problems have become a common psychological problem faced by contemporary University students, and social anxiety disorder is one of the most important psychological problems affecting university students' studies and lives (Pan Z, Zhang D, Hu T, 2018). Grammar and Barry (1999) argued that with social anxiety disorder the affected person gets anxious when he or she evaluates himself or herself negatively for fear of humiliation or embarrassment. They think other people are judging them negatively and this inhibits their actions. Such fear leads to a downward cycle of avoidance and more anxiety when they interact with other people in the University.

Social anxiety disorder (SAD) is a common psychological disorder that is regarded as introversion and shyness in personality and has been misdiagnosed as "shyness" (Rozen and Aderka, 2021). It is essentially a symptom of dysfunctional anxiety (psychological and/or autonomic nervous system) that is confined to specific social situations and leads to fear or avoidance (Bruffaerts, Harris, Kazdin, 2022). Jones (1998) revealed that, social anxiety disorder has undergone considerable diagnostic evolution to reach its present form in the diagnostic and statistical manual (DSM-IV). This differential diagnosis included panic disorder with agoraphobia, avoidance personality disorder, depression and shyness. According to Jones (1998), cross-cultural issues are important to consider because the disorder may manifest differently in different culture and social settings. He however brought out the current conceptualization of the etiology of social anxiety disorder to reflect psychodynamic theories and evidence from family and genetic studies, neurobiological research and neuro-imaging.

Epidemiological studies have found that SAD is a disease across the cultural spectrum, and there is a significant increase in social anxiety experience from childhood development to adolescence (Aune, Nordahl, Beidel, 2022). Studies have shown that there are different degrees of social anxiety among college students that affect their social functions (Meng, He and Zhang, 2021). The fear and avoidance of social occasions and crowds often lead to severe psychosocial impairment and other psychological disorders, such as depression and compulsion (Aune, Nordahl, Beidel, 2022). Moreover, SAD mostly occurs in adolescents, and many patients have other mental disorders, which further lead to intense personal pain and increase social burden (Vogel, Reichert and Hartmann, 2021). If not treated in time, SAD will become chronic and progressive, seriously affecting

the healthy development of personality which can even lead to school dropout (Neufeld, Brust-Renck and Palma, 2021)

Statement of the problem

Social anxiety disorder is a serious and disabling mental health problems that significantly interfere with students wellbeing and quality of life. People with social anxiety disorder always have difficulties performing or giving a talk in front of audience, some are always afraid of social situation and also showed increased disability and impaired quality of life (Ahmad, Faque and Seidi, 2017). Some people with social anxiety disorder suffer from fear to embarrass themselves in front of other people; they worry that they will not measure up, or that they will mess up when talking, speaking to, or interacting with others. Some are afraid that others will judge them to be anxious, weak, afraid, obsessed, shy, or stupid.

Public speaking becomes difficult because of concern that others will notice their trembling hands or voice or they may experience extreme anxiety when conversing with others because of fear that they will appear inarticulate. This is commonly encountered by students in the University of Bamenda during lectures, seminars, conferences, group projects, work study experiences and defenses. Some students have low self-esteem, lack of confidence when interacting with other people. With such challenge it is not surprising that students in the in the University of Bamenda often exhibit inadequate outcomes toward learning such as taking their learning serious, successful preparation toward the exams, low grade point averages (GPA) which may cause many students to drop out from school. It is because of this back drop that the researcher is out to find out how social anxiety disorder influence students attitude toward learning in the University of Bamenda.

Objective of the Study

The main objective was to examine the role of social anxiety disorder on the students' attitude toward learning in University of Bamenda

Specific objectives

To investigate the role of fear of the unknown on the students' attitude toward learning in University of Bamenda

To find out how shyness affects students' attitude toward learning in University of Bamenda

Literature review

Attitude of the University students toward learning

Attitudes of university student towards learning are important factors on the learners' levels of goal setting, problem solving abilities, their beliefs towards learning, their inner and external motivations in the process of learning and all the academic performances they perform. Learning is an individual action which confronts the learners with the risk of going to an unknown place in the end (Giordon, 2010). Having learning expectation at a low level will reduce the motivation and consequently the success (Açıkgöz Ün,2007). Students who are much better motivated for learning are always very successful and tend towards the thinking skills (Burke & Williams,2008). Also, positive beliefs of students towards obtaining knowledge support their efforts to learn a subject (Kara, 2010). Learning is basically an individual performance. For that reason, positive or negative attitudes towards learning are valuable for the success of learning.

According to Oncul (2000) attitudes which cause individuals to always behave in the same way to

people, objects, events and foundations are constant and unchangeable beliefs, feelings and tendencies (Kara, 2010:54). While the positive attitudes serve a better comprehension of the nature of learning for the learners, it also makes the students more open to learning, increases

their expectations from learning process and reduces their anxiety levels. For instance, students having positive attitudes towards reading take more advantage of the advance organizers. Achievements of the students developing negative attitudes go down (Güngör & Açıkgöz, 2006). According to Buruner (1966), the desire of learning interpenetrates people. However, it is important that the intrinsic motivators of the learner, such as the learners'

sense of wonder, high expectations, desire of sufficiency, support this process (Açıkgöz Ün, 2007). It is necessary to be eager and in need of learning in this process. The effort of students made for

learning is the most important way for them to reach knowledge. Because there is desire, openness, expectation, curiosity towards knowledge and meeting of needs in the nature of learners (Şimşek, 2007)

School dropout is a social problem emanating from rapid technological change, increasing automation and even greater specialization. Rumbergo and Thower (2000), opinioned dropout is likely to be seriously disadvantaged in the social and economic world. Musen (1980) suggests that both sociological and psychological factors appear to be involved on the adolescents leaving school prematurely. Musen also emphasized that the dropout rate is higher among the poor than among the rich and its higher in ethnically segregated youth living in urban and rural slums. School dropout on the social development of

adolescence has negative consequence on most secondary school and University students who actually leave school without graduating.

Social anxiety disorder

Social anxiety is characterized by excessive and persistent worries about embarrassing oneself, or showing anxiety symptoms in social and or performance situation (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). Austin and Sciarra (2010) opined that students who suffer from social anxiety disorder are commonly referred to as shy since most student shy in situations until they feel that they are comfortable which may make them to dropout from school. The American Psychiatric Association (1994) notes that, the essential feature of social phobia is a marked and persistent fear of embarrassment and exposure to the situation will consistently provoke an anxiety response. Wilson (1996) argued that individuals who experience social anxiety focus on what they belief others are thinking of them leading to fear of the unknown and shyness.

Heimberg and Becker (2002) revealed that learners who are anxious, weak, boring, unattractive, unintelligent, fearful and obsessive as suffering from social anxiety disorder (Heimberg and Becker, 2002). However, Austin and Sciarra (2010) argue that, some students may suffer from clinical levels of social anxiety, which can be explained by environmental factors, such as living in a high-crime neighbourhood, coming from an abusive home, and so on. In order to determine whether a student's anxiety is coming from a feared situation as opposed to a permanent area of a student's life, one needs to look into self-report and behavioural assessment scales to get a proper diagnosis on the levels of anxiety that the student is experiencing (Austin & Sciarra, 2010).

Common risk factors of social anxiety disorder include lack of a close relationship with an adult, marital conflict in the family of origin, parental history of mental disorder, moving more than three times as a child, failing an examination, and running away from home (Austin & Sciarra, 2010). Once again, it is important to note that even if children have any of these risk factors present in their lives, it does not imply that they will be diagnosed with social anxiety disorder. The risk factors presented are simply warning signs. However, there are effective forms of treatment available. According to Warner, Fisher, Shrout, Rathor, and Klein (2007) the skills for academic and social success (SASS) intervention is the most effective form of treatment because it consists of 12 group session that are 40 minutes in length, with sessions focusing on the topics of psycho-education, realistic thinking, social skills, exposure, and relapse prevention. Warner et al. (2007) suggests that school personnel should become familiar with and implement the SASS intervention.

The SASS intervention is just one form of treatment, and there are other interventions that can be implemented to help the students with social phobia. With any intervention, it is important to assess the individual's problem thoroughly before implementing any form of treatment. Austin and Sciarra (2010) propose three steps for evaluating and assessing an individual's problem, they include: identifying and describing the problem behaviour, collecting behavioural and academic information, and describing the environmental and setting demands. Choosing the form of treatment that will best suit the individual is important. Social anxiety disorder can greatly hinder students" various social activities and functions as an individual is unable to start conversations or do things that he or she enjoys because of the fear of being embarrassed (Leahy and Holland, 2000).

Furthermore, Rapee and Heimberg (1997) advocated that the perception of an evaluative audience leads the individual with SAD to focus on a mental picture of how he or she appears to that audience. This mental picture, which is likely to be negatively unclear, is compared to an estimate of what the person believes may be expected of him or her by that audience. As this discrepancy increases in a negative direction, the perceived probability of negative evaluation from the audience is increased. The person becomes very watchful for negative external cues (e.g., signs of dullness or lack of concern from the audience) and internal cues (e.g., unpleasant physiological feelings), and these cues further inform the person's mental representation as seen by the audience.

Physical symptoms often accompanying social anxiety disorder include excessive blushing, sweating (hyperhidrosis), trembling, palpitations, nausea, and stammering often accompanied with rapid speech. Panic attacks may also occur under intense fear and discomfort (Wein, 2007). Early diagnosis may help minimize the symptoms and the development of additional problems, such as depression and that some sufferers may use alcohol or other drugs to reduce fears and inhibitions at social events. It is common for sufferers of social phobia to self-medicate in this fashion, especially if they are undiagnosed, untreated, or both; this can lead to alcoholism, eating disorders or other kinds of substance abuse (Wein, 2007).

Fear of the unknown as an attribute of social anxiety disorder

Ledoux (2003) opined that fear in human beings may occur in response to a specific stimulus occurring in the present, or in anticipation or expectation of a future threat perceived as a risk to life. The fear response arises from the perception of danger leading to confrontation with or escape from/avoiding the threat

(also known as the fight-or-flight response), which in extreme cases of fear (horror and terror) can be a freeze response.

The American Psychiatric Association notes that the essential feature of social anxiety is a marked and persistent fear of failure and embarrassment. Similarly, Bryan & Bryan (1988) hold that most of these students have not graduated from school due to this fear of failure and that the inability of the school system to recognize and or help them cope with their anxiety. Students reason that, if they have failed before, what is to stop them failing again and, if they do fail again, then this failure must mean they, themselves, are failures (Kirk & Gallaher, 1986).

The tendency for them to personalize failure is perhaps very high. This to them means that educators need to be aware of these fears to help learners understand that failure does not make them a failure and making mistakes is a part of the learning in the socialization process reasons being that; for most people, anxiety about failing is what motivates them to succeed, but for students with social anxiety disorder, this fear of failure can be paralyzing. Fear of failure may prevent individuals with social anxiety disorder from taking on new learning opportunities and might prevent them from participating in class activities, social activities, taking on a new learning opportunity or engaging in discussions with others (Bryan & Bryan, 1988).

Kerns, Cohen, MacDonald, Cho, Stenger & Carter (2004) emphasized that individuals with social anxiety disorder frequently fear the ridicule of others. To them, these fears often develop after the individuals have been routinely ridiculed by teachers, classmates or even family members and that the most crushing of these criticisms usually relates to a perceived lack of intelligence or unfair judgments about the person's degree of motivation or ability to succeed. They further

explain that, comments such as you will never amount to anything, you could do it if you only tried harder, or the taunting of classmates about having a shaky voice, trembling or blushing while talking, has enormous emotional effects on individuals with social anxiety disorder. They however note that for many of these individuals, these and other negative criticisms continue to affect their emotional well-being into their adult years; as it is not uncommon for adults to internalize the negative criticisms and view themselves as dumb, stupid, lazy, and or incompetent. Such negative criticisms often fuel the fear they have about being in social settings.

Wilson (1996) is of the view that individuals with social anxiety disorder frequently fear rejection if they are not seen to be as capable as others; if they come from middle to upper class family where social adjustment is a basic expectation for its members, fear of rejection may be a very real concern. They may also fear that their social skill deficits will preclude them from building meaningful relationships with others and may lead to social rejection and prior experiences of rejection will likely intensify this sense of fear (Kerns, 2004).

Shyness as an attribute of social anxiety disorder

People growing up with social anxiety disorder often feel a sense of shyness. For some, it is a great relief to receive the diagnosis while for others the label only serves to further stigmatize them (Gerber, Ginsberg & Reiff, 1992). Sadly, these feelings of shame often cause the individual to hide their difficulties. Rather than risk being labelled as stupid or accused of being lazy, and incompetent, some individuals avoid social situation as a defence mechanism (Gerber, 1992).

Such students prefer to be alone and show little or no interest in observing others and little or no excitement

when approached by others (Arbeau & Coplan, 2010). Some tend to avoid activities, such as asking and answering questions in social settings, participating in a debate that would put them in the limelight. Shy children tend to be perceived as unfriendly, and untalented, and they tend to feel lonely and have low self-esteem and a higher than average level of gastrointestinal problems (Rubin & Coplan, 2010).

Shy students are less likely to demonstrate their knowledge, and teachers may develop poor perceptions of these students (Kasper (2012)). They tend to engage in significantly less social misbehaviour than other children because children with social anxiety disorder often care so much about what others think of them (Crozier & Hostettler, 2003). Coplan & Rubin (2010) Stipulated that all people feel somewhat uncomfortable, wary or nervous at some point in life, perhaps when meeting unfamiliar people or when at the Centre of attention in a situation. To them, most people can cope successfully with these moments and move on, but others feel awkward, worried or tense during social encounters, especially with unfamiliar people. They emphasize that in some children, shyness is so intense that it keeps them from interacting with others even when they want or need to, hence causing complications in relationships and daily life activities.

Crozier (2002) stated that shy children and adults are more reticent than their peers in social circumstances. They are slower to start conversations with unfamiliar persons, take longer to break silence, give shorter utterances and avoid elaborating. They make less eye contact and touch their faces and bodies more frequently with their hands. Similarly, temperamental traits, including shyness, tend to be relatively stable across time, especially from the preschool years and that shy children appear to be at increased risk for a

host of social, emotional and adjustment difficulties (Rubin, 2009).

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was a survey research design. The researcher used a survey because of the quantitative nature of the study, and because data was collected from a sample, using a questionnaire for the purpose of identifying and describing the population represented by the sample at that particular time. The target population of this study was made up of 15195 students selected from College of Technology, Faculty of Education and Faculty of Art in the University of Bamenda. The sample for this study was made up of 155 students from one school and two faculties (College of Technology, Faculty of Education and Faculty of Art) in the University of Bamenda.

The purposive sampling techniques was used to select schools and faculties in the University of Bamenda where most students were suffering from social anxiety disorder. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire which was validated using the face, construct and content validity. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used in analyzing the data. The descriptive statistical tools used were frequency count and percentages while the Pearson Product Moment Correlation test were used in the study in testing the hypotheses of the study.

Presentation of Findings

Objective one: To investigate the role of fear of the unknown on the students' attitude toward learning in University of Bamenda

The table below present findings on ten (10) structured items which captured students' opinion on fear of the unknown and student's attitudes toward learning

Table 1: Students' opinion on fear and their attitude toward learning

S/N	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	I always experience increase heart beats during exams which makes me to feel as abandoning school	80 (51.6%)	42 (27.1%)	16 (10.3%)	17 (11.0%)
2.	I am always sweeting when I am doing group presentation in school making me to hate school	41 (26.5%)	82 (52.9%)	21 (13.5%)	11 (7.1%)
3.	I always feel unsteady when I am with my classmate in class	41 (26.5%)	35 (22.6%)	33 (21.6%)	44 (28.8%)
4.	I always feel like choking when I am to make speech to others in class	68 (43.9%)	61 (39.4%)	11 (7.1%)	15 (9.7%)
5.	I always experience shortness of breath when I am in a social group in school	59 (38.1%)	48 (31.0%)	27 (17.4%)	21 (13.5%)
6.	I always tremble when presenting something to the crowed in school	44 (28.4%)	67 (43.2%)	27 (17.4%)	17 (11.0%)
7.	I always feel nervous when I hear of exams	27 (17.4%)	53 (34.2%)	50 (32.3%)	25 (16.1%)
8.	I always feel I look foolish when I am with others	39 (25.2%)	79 (51.0%)	26 (16.8%)	11 (7.1%)
9.	I am always afraid of embarrassment making me to feel as dropping out of school	39 (25.2%)	40 (25.8%)	30 (19.4%)	46 (29.7%)
10	I easy get discouraged by failure or criticism from others	22 (14.2%)	32 (20.6%)	39 (25.2%)	62 (40.0%)
	Multiple response	**460 (29.7%)**	**539 (34.8%)**	**280 (18.1%)**	**269 (17.4%)**

In summary, findings show that 64.5% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that fear negatively influence their attitudes toward schooling which may lead to school dropout while 35.5% of them were against.

Verification of Hypothesis One (Ho1): There is no significant relationship between fear and students' attitude toward learning in University of Bamenda

Table 2: Relationship between fear of the unknown and attitude toward learning

	Fear of the unknown	Student's attitude toward learning
R-value	1.000	.485**

Pearson Product Moment Correlation test	P-value		.000
	N	155	155

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Statistically, findings show that there is a very significant, moderate and positive relationship between fear of the unknown and students attitudes toward learning (P<0.001). The positive sign of the relationship implies that students are more likely to avoid learning when are being afraid of the unknown and less likely to avoid learning when they are not afraid. Therefore, the null hypothesis that states there is no significant relationship between fear of the unknown and student's attitude toward learning in the university of Bamenda was rejected and the alternative that states that there is a significant relationship between fear of the unknown and students' attitude toward learning in the University of Bamenda was accepted.

Objective two: To find out how shyness affects students' attitude toward learning in University of Bamenda

Table 3 below present findings on ten (10) structured items which captured students' opinion on shyness and student's attitude learning in school.

Table 14: Students' opinion on shyness and student's attitude toward learning

S/N	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I always feel like blushing	101 (65.2%)	42 (27.1%)	6 (3.9%)	6 (3.9%)
2.	I am always worried when I think of school work	51 (32.9%)	74 (47.7%)	14 (9.0%)	16 (10.3%)
3.	I always feel uncomfortable in school	42 (27.1%)	68 (43.8%)	23 (14.8%)	22 (14.2%)
4.	I am always timid in my discussion	58 (37.4%)	65 (41.9%)	20 (12.9%)	12 (7.7%)
5.	I always regain self-consciousness when talking to others	65 (41.9%)	73 (47.1%)	4 (2.6%)	13 (8.4%)
6.	I always feel insecure when I am with strangers	61 (39.4%)	71 (45.8%)	11 (7.1%)	12 (7.7%)
7.	I am always nervous when I am expecting to present on a task in school	62 (40.0%)	70 (45.2%)	14 (9.0%)	9 (5.8%)
8.	I am always tense when presenting group work to my peers	28 (18.1%)	39 (25.2%)	36 (23.2%)	52 (33.5%)

9.	I am always very anxious to carry out a task	26 (16.8%)	43 (27.7%)	28 (18.1%)	58 (37.4%)
10	I always upset when exams timetable is out	22 (14.2%)	46 (29.7%)	33 (21.3%)	54 (34.8%)
Multiple response		**516 (33.3%)**	**591 (38.1%)**	**189 (12.2%)**	**254 (16.4%)**

In summary, findings show that 71.4% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that shyness negative influences their attitude toward learning in the University of Bamenda while 28.6% of them disagreed.

Verification of Hypothesis Two (Ho2): There is no significant relationship between shyness and students' attitude toward learning in the University of Bamenda.

Table 4: Relationship between shyness and students' attitude toward learning

		Parental background	Students' attitude toward learning
Pearson Product	R-value	1.000	-.667**
Moment	P-value		.000
Correlation test	N	155	155

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Statistically, findings show that there is a very significant, strong and negative relationship between shyness and students' attitude toward learning (P<0.001). The negative sign of the relationship implies that students are less likely to avoid learning when they are not shy and more likely to avoid learning when they are shy. Therefore, the null hypothesis that states there is no significant relationship between shyness and students' attitude toward learning in the University of Bamenda was rejected and the alternative that states that there is a significant relationship between shyness influence and students' attitude toward learning in the University of Bamenda was accepted.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Fear of the unknown and students' attitude toward learning

The finding of the study shows that fear of the unknown affect student attitude toward schooling in the University of Bamenda. This implies that students

are more likely to avoid learning when they are afraid of the unknown and less likely to avoid learning when they are not fearful. This finding is in line with Beidel and Turner (1988) as they opined that fear can be experienced with long, drawn out daily symptoms that reduce the quality of life. They believed that individuals repress socially unacceptable ideas; therefore, a person with social phobia may have unconscious motives keeping them away from social situations so that this socially unacceptable, impulsive behaviour can be avoided.

The study further illustrates that a hand full of student are typically afraid to talk in public because they usually suffer from excessive blushing, sweeting, trembling and rapid speech. Such students will rather keep to themselves than interact with others whom they, think will judge them negatively and laugh at them. This therefore makes them unable to easily cope and adjust to their given environments which can make them to drop out from school. This is in line with Remes and Jones (2016) who explained that poor coping skills such as rigidity and avoidance can result to social anxiety disorder as a result of fear. This is supported by Ledoux (2003) who posits that fear in human beings may occur in response to a specific stimulus occurring in the present, or in anticipation or expectation of a future threat perceived as a risk to body or life. The fear response arises from the perception of danger leading to confrontation with or escape from / avoiding the threat.

Fear is often considered to be masked by anger or anxiety which makes students to lose out on a number of important issues regarding their interactions and performance. This can therefore be discouraged by lecturers, counsellors and even friends through the provision of a conducive and friendly environment for all to live and adjust freely. This is in conformity with Bryam and Bryan (1989) who said students hardly graduated from school due to fear and the inability of the school system to recognized and or help them cope with their fears. The findings continue to demonstrate that when students lack confidence in their general ability to do things and to cope with situations, they experience difficulties in risk taking which could include new tasks, responding to questions or considering an alternative view point; such students may have difficulties in maintaining self-esteem and if they feel over whelmed they may become angry or feel helpless. This is supported by kerns (2004) who explained that individuals are less capable of concentrating hence misjudge their internal state and some may dissociate.

Shyness and School students' attitude toward learning

The finding of the study shows that shyness affects student's attitude toward learning in the University of Bamenda. This implies that students are less likely to avoid learning when they are not shy and more likely to avoid learning when they are shy. Similarly, the findings are in line with Crozier (2002) as she indicated that shy students tend to engage in significantly less social misbehaviour than other children because children with social anxiety disorder often care so much about what others think of them which can lead to school dropout. Shy students are more reticent than their peers in social circumstances and that they are slower to start conversations with unfamiliar persons, take longer to break silence, give shorter utterances and avoid elaborating which can make them to drop out from school.

Students revealed that they don't act when they foresee danger and are shy with the presence of others. This is in line with Asendorpf (1990) as he proposed that shy students experience avoidance behaviour as they wish to interact with their peers but

avoid them due to fears of poor social performance and negative peer treatment, resulting to their dropout. The findings revealed that shyness negatively affects students' attitude toward schooling. Students are likely to become passive in school, and their perceived social weakness can eventually spiral into perceived weaknesses in everything some to leave school without graduating. This is in line with Mounts, Valentiner, Anderson, & Boswell (2006) as they argued that students who are shy are more likely to be lonely, have less friendship quality, and in consequence, have either minor or major symptoms of depression and that such symptoms of depression can influence every aspect of a person's life, including desire and well-being. Coplan & Arbeau (2008) also postulated that shy students in a new school often suffer because of the overwhelming worries and distractions thrust upon them in a short period of time. This makes them shy in group activities hence, they often prefer to look on as opposed to fully participate thus keeping themselves from comprehending the concepts that the activities were meant to teach.

CONCLUSION

Findings showed that social anxiety disorder has a significant negative effect on students' attitudes toward learning in the University of Bamenda. Further findings revealed that fear of the unknown and shyness are the negative predictors of students' attitudes toward learning in the University of Bamenda. This therefore implies that students who are afraid and shy always feel as dropping out from the University of Bamenda. For students' dropout or negative attitude toward learning to be change, a good adjustment plan need to set up to make students feel comfortable in the University. Students need to set realistic and be able to manage frustrations, tensions, and fears which is part of the normal life. It is therefore very important for the students, guidance counsellors, parents and educators to work as a team even at their various levels to ensure that the student feels comfortable in school so as to enhance their proper adjustments.

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