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# **SOCIAL INTERACTION ANXIETY AND ACADEMIC ADJUSTMENT AMONG FRESHMEN COLLEGE STUDENTS**

**Achmad Sholeh**

Department of Psychology, Universitas Islam Indonesia  
Email: zholeh.wei@gmail.com; 15320217@students.uui.ac.id

**Sakinah**

Department of Psychology, Universitas Islam Indonesia

**Hasna Alfiani Fadhila**

Department of Psychology, Universitas Islam Indonesia

**Bramantio A. Nugraha**

Department of Psychology, Universitas Islam Indonesia

**Nur Widiasmara**

Department of Psychology, Universitas Islam Indonesia

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**Abstract:** This study presents to investigate the relationship between social interaction anxiety and academic adjustments among freshman college students. This study used a quantitative approach with correlational method. The instruments in this study used Social Interaction Anxiety Scale (SIAS) which developed by Mattick et al. and Academic Adjustment variable was measured by used Academic Adjustment Scale by Anderson et al. The subjects in this study are 216 freshman college students, consist of 110 men and 106 women. The results were consistent with the study hypotheses, showed that there is a negative relationship between social interaction anxiety and academic adjustment among freshmen college students. The data showed from the value of correlation  $r = -0.441$  with significance of  $p = 0.00$ ,  $p < 0,05$ . Based on the result, its concluded that social interaction anxiety has influence academic adjustment among freshman college students.

**Keywords:** Social Interaction Anxiety, Academic Adjustment, Freshmen.

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**Introduction:** Entering college after completing high school education will make students feel a new life. This new life will definitely not be separated from the new challenges. Those challenges exceed the demands for individual needs in academic, activities, and learn more independently than the previous education (Credé, Harms, Niehorster, & Gaye-Valentine, 2012). This period is also a period that is very vulnerable to problems, students will be faced with various new situations, students are also considered capable to decide their own future and capable to find out their ability and responsibility, especially in academic life (Sholeh, 2017).

Beside the change of academic life, freshman college students will also experience the change of social life. The existence of new social life where the students are newly be a part of the institution, be an active member in a community in the university, and adjust themselves with the new role and responsibility are the things that must be mustered by them (Aderi, Jdaitawi, Ishak, & Jdaitawi, 2013; Credé et al., 2012; Kneipp, Cyphers, & Kelly, 2009).

Consequently, individual adjustment ability is necessary in this period, especially adapt to social change, psychologist, and academic demand in college life. The closest construct to define this condition is academic adjustment.

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Adjustment is a process of individual behaviour to maintain balance in various needs or between individual needs and obstacles in the environment (Geetha, 2013). Adjustment is a process that start from birth to death, in the form of subjective experience where individuals try to find the right behaviour in certain situation or in a situation that changes, individuals that succeed in adjustment will have final result in the form of a comfortable life, avoided from pressures, conflict, and motivate individuals adaptation in the future (Taneja, 2017).

Academic adjustment is also considered as individual ability to manage its social challenges, psychologist, and its knowledge when experiencing a transition to college life. Individuals that succeed in academic adjustment will show the success in academic lifestyle, academic achievement, and academic motivation (Anderson, Guan, & Koc, 2016).

Main area that is considered has influence in academic adjustment problem that discovered in students are academic problems, emotional reaction, and social interaction (Mesidor & Sly, 2016). Social interaction becomes one of the important areas that also affect academic adjustment in students. This study focuses on how social interaction relationship in the context of anxiety or usually called by social interaction anxiety with academic adjustment.

According to the research, it is found that individual adjustment ability has correlation with anxiety. More specifically, it is known that social anxiety has a negative relationship with individual academic adjustment (Arjanggal & Kusumaningsih, 2016; Jenaabadi, Vali Rooh, Khods, & Hajiabadi, 2016).

Social anxiety or social phobia describe as afraid of (and avoids) social situations. These situations fall into two broad headings: doing something in front of unfamiliar people and interpersonal interactions (Oltmanns & Emery, 2012). The new term of social phobia in DSM V is social anxiety disorder which is a persistent, unrealistic fear of social situation or meet unfamiliar person (Kring, Jhonson, Davidson, & Neale, 2012). It can be said that social anxiety disorder is an unrealistic fear of social situation, unfamiliar person, and interpersonal interaction.

Term of social interaction anxiety refers to distress when meet someone or have a conversation with others, strangers or friends. Specially, main concern include fear of become unclear, tedious, sounds stupid, do not know what to say about or how to respond in social interaction, and be ignored (Mattick & Clarke, 1998).

The previous study shows that social interaction influence learning process and well-being on students (Russell & Topham, 2012) and quality of life on medical students' (Al-Omari & Imtenan F Altowairiqi, 2017). Another study also shows that Asian students that studied in International school encounter more obstacles in self-adjustment due to the pressure, anxiety, and culture differences than European students (Fritz, Chin & DeMarinis, 2008).

### **Research Method:**

**Participant:** Participant of this study were 216 freshmen college students, consist of 110 men and 106 women from Yogyakarta, Bali, Kalimantan, and Sumatera-Province Indonesia. Data was collected by use convenience technic sampling.

**Measurement:** This study was done by quantitative research to test empirically correlation between social interaction scale and academic adjustment among freshmen students in first-years. The collected data in this study, used academic-report scale for two variables. Academic adjustment scale was adapted from The Academic Adjustment Scale (AAS) by (Anderson et al., 2016). Reliability coefficient of this scale was 0.76 (Cronbach Alpha Coefficient). Social interaction anxiety scale was adapted from Social Interaction Anxiety Scale (SIAS) by (Mattick & Clarke, 1998). Reliability coefficient of this scale was 0.92 (Cronbach Alpha Coefficient).

**Statistical Analysis:** This study used correlation analysis to analyse relation between social interaction anxiety dan academic adjustment among college students. This analysis method also used Pearson Correlation to correlate between factor and gender of variable.

**Results:** This study aims to empirically test the relationship between social interaction anxiety and academic adjustment on first-year students. Based on the data obtained, the result as follows.

**Table 1:** The Results of Correlation between Social Interaction Anxiety and Academic Adjustment (Pearson Correlation)

Variable	N	R	Sig.	r <sup>2</sup>
Social Interaction Anxiety* Academic-Adjustment	216	-0.441**	0.00	0.194

According to the data above, it is obtained that social interaction anxiety has negative correlation that is very significant with academic-adjustment. This is indicated by the value of  $r=-0.441$  with significance of  $p=0.00$ ,  $p<0.05$ . Although it correlates very significantly, social interaction anxiety only makes effective contribution in the amount of 19.4% on academic adjustment on first-year students. The following is the result of correlation in each aspect.

**Table 2:** The Results of Correlation between Social Interaction Anxiety and Aspects of Academic Adjustment

Variable and Aspect	N	Mean	R	Sig.
Social Interaction Anxiety*Academic Lifestyle	216	9.726	-0.467**	0.001
Social Interaction Anxiety*Academic Achievement		10.055	-0.341**	0.000
Social Interaction Anxiety*Academic Motivation		12.888	-0.073	0.286

The result above shows that social interaction anxiety has negative relationship that is very significant on academic lifestyle aspect and academic achievement. Whereas in academic motivation aspect, there was no relationship with social interaction anxiety found. It can be seen from the amount of correlation that is obtained only  $r=-0.073$  with significance of  $p=0.286$   $p>0.005$ . Furthermore, correlation will be made based on gender.

**Table 3:** The Results of Correlation between Social Interaction Anxiety and Academic Adjustment by Gender

Variable and Aspect	Gender	N	R	Sig.
Social Interaction Anxiety*Academic-Adjustment	Men	110	-0.397**	0.000
	Women	106	-0.488**	0.000
Social Interaction Anxiety*Academic Lifestyle	Men	110	-0.355*	0.027
	Women	106	-0.560*	0.016
Social Interaction Anxiety*Academic Achievement	Men	110	-0.260**	0.006
	Women	106	-0.412**	0.000
Social Interaction Anxiety*Academic Motivation	Men	110	-0.221*	0.021
	Women	106	0.075	0.443

According to the result of correlation between male and female, it is known that social interaction anxiety has very significant negative relationship with academic adjustment. Meanwhile, academic motivation aspect on female students, there is no correlation with social interaction anxiety. This result is obtained from  $r=0.075$  with significance of  $p=0.443$   $p>0.005$ .

**Discussion:** Discussion in this study will examine the relationship between social interaction anxiety and academic adjustment on first-year students. The result found shows that social interaction anxiety significantly correlates negatively with academic adjustment on first-year students. This result is consistent with the previous study (Arjungsi & Kusumaningsih, 2016; Jenaabadi et al., 2016) which shows that there is a relationship between social interaction anxiety and academic adjustment. The higher social interaction anxiety, the lower academic adjustment. Otherwise, the lower social interaction anxiety, the higher academic adjustment.

Moreover, it is also found significant negative relationship between social interaction anxiety with academic adjustment aspect, that is academic lifestyle, academic achievement, and academic motivation. The highest correlation shown from relationship between social interaction anxiety with academic lifestyle. Hakami et al. (2017) stated that social anxiety disorder makes students have difficulty at work, social interaction, family problem, reduce the quality of life. It shows that social interaction anxiety can affect a lot of aspects in students' life, include the academic aspect.

Furthermore, it is found unique result in the relationship of gender with academic adjustment aspect, where social interaction anxiety has negative relationship that is very significant with academic lifestyle aspect and academic achievement on both gender, male and female.

However, there is different result on academic motivation aspect between male students and female students. Male students' social interaction anxiety has significant negative relationship with academic motivation while in female students' social interaction anxiety there was no significant negative relationship found. It is possible that academic motivation affected by another factor. According to Isik et al. (2018) academic motivation affected a lot by cultural factor, especially minority ethnic. First-year students come from various places around Indonesia, with different cultural background to continue their study in well-known universities. So, there is difference on academic motivation in each individual.

Martin and Marsh (Bugler, McGeown, & St Clair-Thompson, 2013) also stated that female students have higher academic motivation than male students, especially in terms of focus to learn, tasks management and persistence. It is in line with the result of this study where social interaction anxiety has no relationship with academic motivation on female students which proves that academic motivation on female students in Indonesia cannot be defined through their social interaction anxiety.

The limitation in this study is the use of sampling method, the research only used convenience technique. For the next researcher are expected to use another sampling method in data collecting. Besides, this study does not deeply explore categorization the level of interaction anxiety. Therefore, further research is needed to study this phenomenon.

**Conclusion:** According to the result above, it can be concluded that social interaction anxiety has significant negative relationship with academic adjustment on first-year students. The higher social interaction anxiety, the lower academic adjustment. Otherwise, the lower social interaction anxiety, the higher academic adjustment on students. Still, the difference of gender also influences the found of this study.

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