

**MANIFESTATIONS OF SOCIAL PHOBIA AND PUBLIC SPEAKING ANXIETY AMONG
STUDENT TEACHERS OF CROSS RIVER UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY,
CALABAR –NIGERIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL TESTING AND
MEASUREMENT**

BY

**NTU N. NKOMO (PhD)
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
CROSS RIVER UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY CALABAR
Phone: 08030414111, 09091283332
Email: nkomo606@gmail.com**

**HENRY OJATING (Ph.D)
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
CROSS RIVER UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, CALABAR
Phone: 08038204929
Email: henryojating @gmail.com**

**BEING A PAPER PRESENTED AT THE 16TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF
NIGERIA SOCIETY FOR EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST (NISEP). HELD AT IMO
STATE UNIVERSITY, OWERI FROM 25TH-29TH OCTOBER, 2016**

Abstract

The study investigated the manifestations of social phobia and public speaking anxiety as psychological problems, which were presumed to have effect on the teaching performance of student teachers. Social phobia reflects intense and persistent fear in social and performance situations, where sufferers of this disorder physically manifest trembling, shaky voice, muscle tension, confusion etc. While public speaking anxiety typically involves concerns that the audience are not impressed with one's performance. This significantly impairs proper functioning in public presentations, resulting to incompetence and lack of confidence in public speaking. To carry out this study, four hypotheses were formulated. The study population comprised 360 registered final year students in faculty of Education who were involved in teaching practice. A total of 180 male and female students formed the sample vis 97 males and 83 females. The instrument for data collection was a likert type questionnaire titled social phobia and public speaking anxiety questionnaire with a reliability coefficient of 0.087. The major findings indicated that there were significant manifestations of social phobia and of public speaking anxiety among student teachers. No significant difference was also found in social phobia and public speaking anxiety between male and female student teachers. It was recommended that students should be given opportunities to present seminar papers, demonstrate teaching, discuss in class and in groups.

Keywords: Confidence, disorder, performance, phobia, public speaking anxiety social

Introduction

Effective teaching does not only depend on the intelligence level of the teacher and or possessing variety of teaching materials. It involves good communication ability of the teacher. Having a grip of vocabulary is a score point for communication but there is need for a teacher to be mentally healthy and psychologically balanced. A psychologically balanced teacher has a better chance of being properly coordinated and confident. This study focuses on the psychological problems faced by beginners in teaching, thus social phobia and public speaking anxiety. According to Teachman (2015) “social phobia also known as social anxiety disorder reflects intense and persistent fear in social and performance situations where negative evaluation by others can occur” persons with this disorder fear gatherings such as parties, as well as dating, initiating conversations and interacting with persons in positions of authority. In some cases the situation leads to panic attacks and general fear, such that they interfere with occupational and academic functioning, social activities and relationships. Public speaking fear according to Teachman (2015) is a particular form of social anxiety which typically involves concerns that the audience will think that one’s performance is inadequate. Given that public speaking fears are extremely common and normative, it is critical that the fears may interfere with normal routines or significantly impair functioning. Dennis (2016) identify that social anxiety disorder is a chronic mental health condition that causes a person to feel intense anxiety of fear of activities or situations in which he or she believes that others are watching or judging. More preference for solitude, sufferers of social anxiety disorder may experience actual physical symptoms when forced to confront their fears. Sufferers of social anxiety disorder manifest the following physical signs according to Dennis (2016) blushing, profuse sweating, trembling or shaking, nausea, stomach upset, difficulty taking shaking voice, muscle tension, confusion, palpitations, diarrhea, cold clammy hands, difficulty making eye contact. The behavioural signs include; intense fear of being in situations with unknown people fear of being judged, worrying

about embarrassment anxious or awkward behaviour, fear of being at the centre of attention. Associated personality traits in those with social anxiety disorder may include: low self esteem, trouble being assertive, negative self talk, hypersensitivity to criticism, poor social skills. Buckner, Schmidt and Lang (2008) Meta-analyses indicate that people suffering from persistent social anxiety, the quality of output and psychological functioning is significantly impaired. Austin (2004) found that student teachers who were socially anxious performed poorly in their presentation. North and Rivers (2001) reported that individuals with public speaking anxiety most often experience a variety of symptoms in public speaking situation including palpitations, sweating, looking into the audience faces, establishing eyes contacts, muscle tension, confusion and nervousness. Turk, Heimberg, Orsillo, Holt, Gitow and Street (2001) in their study on gender differences in social phobia and public speaking anxiety. Women exhibited more severe social fears, significant greater fear than men when talking to authority, acting performing, giving a talk in front of an audience, speaking up in meetings, giving a report to a group and going to open party. Kinrys and Wyant (2005) in a related study carried out in Sau Paulo found significant gender difference in social anxiety disorder (SAD). Women showed increased social fear, public functional impairment and lack of confidence than men. Findings in a study by Gaibani and Elementi (2014) revealed that gender has positive relationship with public speaking anxiety, however, no significant impact of gender on public speaking anxiety was found. It implied that being male or female had not constituted having anxiety in public speaking. The results of Matsuda and Gobel (2004) cited by Gaibani and Elementi in consonance did not find any significant difference between male and female anxiety in public speaking. Over the years the researchers had observed during teaching practice supervisions that some of the student-teachers who had low scores in teaching practice assessments surprisingly had high GPA scores in their course work, which suggests that the contradiction would have occurred through the manifestation of social phobia speaking anxiety.

Implications for Educational testing and measurement

Testing is the systematic process of examining a learner on a given attribute or characteristic, which may be cognitive or non-cognitive, with a view obtaining a performance score or rating. The numerical observations or scores derived from the testing process are measurements associated with the attributed or characteristics being tested. The student teacher associated with social phobia and public speaking anxiety often lives in fear of not doing well when tested or examined, in any way, for teaching competence. In fact this fear that defines his psychological state and makes him feel even more comfortable when no one is assessing his performance in speech or otherwise. Perhaps, what significantly lends credence to this arguments is the position credited to the American Psychiatric Association (2013), in defining social anxiety or public speaking anxiety as a fear of negative evaluation, which, in educational contexts, is a real and measureable consequence that forms part of the assessment process. Horwitz and Yonug (1991) also corroborated that an apprehension towards academic evaluation, is a fear of failing in tests and an unpleasant experience held either consciously or unconsciously by learners in various situations. The fear that has to do with test, measurement and evaluation on any attribute, either cognitive or non-cognitive, has far reaching effects on the student teacher with social phobia and public speaking anxiety. These may include avoidance of assessments, failure and /or outright withdrawal from training. Goberman, Hyghis and Hydock (2011) opined that necessary. This may possibly include avoiding public speaking assessment, avoiding enrolling in particular units of study, and perhaps even withdrawing from a particular degree and career pathway where public speaking is required.

Statement of Hypotheses

1. Male and female student teachers do not differ significantly in social phobia.
2. Male and female student teachers do not differ significantly in public speaking anxiety.

3. The manifestation of social phobia among student teachers is not statistically significant.
4. There is no significant manifestation of public speaking anxiety among student teachers.

Methodology

The study adopted a survey design and was carried out in Cross River University of Technology, Calabar –Nigeria. The study population comprised all final year students of faculty of education 2015/2016. Using accidental sampling procedures, the sample selected for the study was one hundred and eighty final year students of the University’s Faculty of Education. Out of this number, 96 (or 53%) were males while 83 (or 46%) were females. The data used for the study were collected through a questionnaire designed by the researchers-social phobia and public speaking anxiety questionnaire (SPPSAQ). The instrument had two sections- A and B. section A comprised demographic information such as, gender and age, while section B was made up of sixteen (16) items in which the first eight measured social phobia and the remaining eight items measured public speaking anxiety.

Hypothesis one

The null form of this hypothesis stated that male and female student teachers do not differ significantly in social phobia.

The independent t-test analysis techniques was applied in testing this hypothesis at .05 significance level. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 1

Table 1: Independent t-test analysis of difference in social phobia between male and female

student teachers (N=180)

Gender of student teacher	N	Mean \bar{x}	Std Dev.	t-value	p-value
Male	96	17.78	4.26	-1.76	.241
Female	83	18.52	4.09		

P > .05

Table 1 shows that the p-value (.241) associated with the computed t-value (-1.176) is greater than the chosen level of significance (.05). Based on this outcome, the null hypothesis was retained. It was therefore obvious to conclude that the manifestation of social phobia between male and female student teachers of the Cross River University of Technology was not significantly different.

Hypothesis Two

This hypothesis stated that male and female students teachers do not differ significantly in public speaking anxiety.

To test this hypothesis the independent t-test analysis technique was used at .05 significance level.

The results and presented in Table 2

Table 2: Independent t-test analysis of difference in public speaking anxiety between male and female student teachers (N=180)

Gender of student teacher	N	Mean \bar{x}	Std Dev.	t-value	p-value
Male	96	18.40	4.17	-0.934	.352
Female	83	18.98	4.12		

P > .05

In Table 2, the p-value (.352) associated with the computed t-value (-0.934) is greater than the chosen level of significance (.05). On the basis of this result, the null hypothesis was not rejected. Thus, there is no significant difference between male and female student teachers of the Cross River University of Technology in public speaking anxiety.

Hypothesis Three

This hypothesis stated that the manifestation of social phobia among student teachers is not statistically significant.

To test this hypothesis the one sample t-test was applied at .05 level of significance. The results are summarized and presented in Table 3

Table 3: One sample t-test analysis of significance of social phobia among student teachers**(N=180)**

Variable	N	Mean \bar{x}	Std Dev.	t-value	p-value
Social phobia	180	18.13	4.17	58.273*	.000

*significant at .05 level $P < .05$ Expected value (0)0

Table 3 shows that the p-value (.000) associated with the computed t-value (58.273) is less than the chosen level of significance (.05). Based on this outcome the null hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternative. This means that the manifestation of the social phobia among student teachers of the Cross River University of Technology is statistically significantly.

Hypothesis Four

The null form of this hypothesis stated that public speaking anxiety manifestation among student teachers is not statistically significant.

The test this hypothesis the one sample t-test was used at .05 level of significance. The results are presented in Table 4

Table 4: One sample t-test analysis of significance of public speaking anxiety manifestation among student teachers (N=180)

Variable	N	Mean \bar{x}	Std Dev.	t-value	p-value
Public speaking anxiety	180	18.05	4.14	60.488*	.000

*significant at .05 level. $P > .05$ Expected value (c) = 0

Table 4 shows that the p-value (.000) associated with the calculated t-value (60.488) is less than the chosen level of significance (.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implied that public speaking anxiety manifestation among student teachers of Cross River University of Technology was statistically significant.

Summary of Findings

The findings of the present study are as follows:

1. Manifestations of social phobia between male and female student teachers of the Cross River University of Technology was not significantly different.
2. There was no significant difference between male and female student teachers of Cross River University of Technology in public speaking anxiety.
3. The manifestations of social phobia among student teachers of Cross River University of Technology is statistically significant.
4. Public speaking anxiety manifestation among student teachers of Cross River University of Technology was statistically significant.

Discussion of Findings

The finding that social phobia manifestation student teacher of Cross River University of Technology was statistically significant without a significant difference between male and female student-teachers that in the manifestation of social phobia contradicts the finding of Turk et al (2011) who found gender difference in the manifestation of social phobia. They found that women exhibited more sever social, fears, significant greater fear than men when talking to authority, acting, performing giving a talk to a group and going to open party. The present study also contradicted the study of kinrys and Wyant (2005) who reported a significant gender difference in the manifestation of social phobia. However, the study of Matsuda and Gobel (2004) in consonance with the present study did not find any significant difference in the manifestation of public speaking anxiety between males and females. Though the study of Matsuda and Gobel (2004) did not find significant difference in public speaking, But one can explain that both variables social phobia and public speaking are very closely related in characteristics.

The finding that there is a significant manifestation of public speaking anxiety among student teachers of Cross River University of Technology without a significant difference between gender corroborates the findings of Gaibani and Elmenti (2014) that gender has positive relationship with public speaking anxiety, however there is no significant impact of gender on public speaking anxiety was found. The result implied that being a male or a female had not constituted having anxiety in public speaking.

Conclusion

Social phobia and public speaking anxiety are psychological disorders which are closely related in terms of characteristics and effect on individual performance. Individuals who are sufferers of social phobia are also very much likely to exhibit public speaking anxiety. These disorders impair students presentation output, reduce confidence, create muscular tension, and negatively affect their level of competence. It is therefore possible for a student teacher who is a beginner in teaching to perform poorly in teaching practice assessment despite his level of intelligence if these disorders are present.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made.

1. Student should be given opportunities of presenting seminar papers before other class members to improve their public speaking anxiety.
2. Micro-teaching should be frequently organized as this will create a platform for students to practice teaching and subdue public speaking problems.
3. Students should be encouraged to get involved in extra-curricular activities. The will reduce social phobia.
4. Opportunities for group discussions and group assignments should be created for students.

References

- American Psychiatric Association (2013). Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (5th ed.). Arlington VA: American Psychiatric Association.
- Austin, B. D. (2004). Social anxiety disorder, shyest, and perceived social self-efficacy in college students retrieved from <https://thepsychologist.bps.org.UK> on 12th September, 2016.
- Buckner, J. D., Schmidt, N. B. & Lang, A. R. (2008). Specificity of social anxiety disorder as a risk factor for alcohol and Cannabis dependence. *Journal of Psychiatric Research*, 42, (1) 230-239.
- Dennis, K. (2016). Social anxiety disorder symptoms and effect. Retrieved from www.Timberline-Knolls.com on 20th September 2016.
- Gaibani, A. & Elmenti, F. (2014). The role of gender in influencing public speaking anxiety². *International Journal of Gender and Woman's Studies*. 2(2), 105-116.
- Goberman, A. M., Hughis, S. & Haydock, T. (2011). Acoustic characteristics of public speaking anxiety and practice effects. *Speech communication*, 53(6), 867-876.
- Horwitz, E. K. & Young, D. J. (1991). *Language anxiety: From theory and research to classroom implications*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Kinrys, G. & Wygant, L. (2005). Gender matters in social anxiety disorders. *Revisita Brasileira de Psiquiatria*. 27 (2), 68-75.
- North, M. & Rivers, J. (2001). Virtual reality therapy in aid of public speaking. *Internal Journal of Virtual Reality* 3, 2-7.
- Teachman, B. A. (2015). Social Anxiety disorder and public speaking anxiety. Accessed found [www.div.12.org/psychological-treatments/disorder/social-phobia and public speaking anxiety](http://www.div.12.org/psychological-treatments/disorder/social-phobia%20and%20public%20speaking%20anxiety); on 10th August 2016.
- Tuck, CL; Heimberg, R. G., Orsillo, S. M. Holth, C. S. Gitow, A., & Street, L. L. (2011). An investigation of gender difference in social phobia. *Journal of Anxiety Disorder*. 12(3), 209-223.

SOCIAL PHOBIA AND PUBLIC SPEAKING ANXIETY QUESTIONNAIRE (SPPSAQ)

Introduction

This questionnaire is designed to collect information about the feelings student teachers have concerning social phobia and public speaking anxiety. The information is required for academic purposes only. For this reason, your personal identity is not required.

SECTION A

Demographic Information:

Please tick (√) as applicable.

1. Gender: Male () Female ()
2. age: Below 20 years () 20-25 years () Above 25 years ()

SECTION B

Social Phobia and Public Speaking Anxiety

Please indicate your opinion on each of the statements below by ticking () based on the options:

Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A) Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

S/N	Social Phobia	SA	A	D	SD
3.	I always have extreme fear I am in any public place				
4.	I find it very difficult to look straight into people's faces when I am talking with them.				
5.	There is always a feeling of nervousness in me when in the midst of my colleagues.				
6.	When in public places I always try to hide myself in fright.				
7.	I never feel any sense of fear at all in public places.				
8.	I can look boldly into anybody's face.				
9.	I never feel shy at all in the midst of my colleagues.				
10.	I am never frightened before any audience.				
	Public speaking anxiety				
11.	I always feel nervous when speaking in any public place.				
12.	I shiver a lot when making a public speech.				
13.	My heart beats extra-ordinarily whenever I am making a public speech.				
14.	The thought of delivering a public speech often makes me feel sick.				
15.	Public speaking makes me feel very uneasy.				
16.	I am never when making a public speech.				
17.	I have always felt a sense of self-confidence making a public speech.				
18.	The thought of making a public speech never makes me feel sick.				