

# Social Anxiety Disorder and Academic Performance of Social Studies Undergraduates in Delta State Universities.

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## ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between social anxiety disorder and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State universities. The study focused specifically on the relationship between personal withholdment, shyness, seclusiveness and academic performance. Three research questions and three null hypotheses guided the study. A correlational research design was adopted. The population comprised 128 Social Studies undergraduates in 100–300 levels in Delta State-owned universities during the 2024/2025 academic session. The entire population of 128 respondents was used through purposive or judgemental sampling technique. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire containing 30 items and students' sessional Senate-approved results. The instrument was validated by supervisors in the Department of Social Science Education and an expert from the Department of Measurement and Evaluation, Delta State University, Abraka. Reliability was established using the test-retest method, which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.76. Data were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and linear regression analysis at the 0.05 level of significance with the aid of SPSS. Findings revealed a positive relationship between personal withholdment and academic performance, with personal withholdment accounting for 3.2% of the variation in academic performance. Shyness also showed a positive relationship with academic performance and accounted for 6.1% of the variation. Similarly, seclusiveness had a positive relationship with academic performance and accounted for 5.4% of the variation. The three null hypotheses were rejected, indicating that personal withholdment, shyness and seclusiveness had significant relationships with the academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State universities. The study concluded that attention should be given to students' social and interpersonal experiences to enhance their academic engagement and performance.

**Keywords:** Social Anxiety Disorder, Personal Withholdment, Shyness, Seclusiveness, Academic Performance, Social Studies Undergraduates

## INTRODUCTION

It is highly significant to note that human being's entire existence is commonly based on the amount of knowledge he acquires, how much this knowledge is utilized in developing himself, his country, and the world at large. This explains the reason underlying the need for education. The basic thing that one gets from education is knowledge. The knowledge we gain from education plays a great role in our future life and helps us to understand the happenings in a much more cohesive manner. Meanwhile, the success of education is a measure based on the academic performance of students. Educators and researchers have long been interested in exploring variables contributing to the quality of academic performance of learners. According to Jamilu and Isa (2026), academic performance is affected by many factors including parents' education levels and income, teachers' knowledge of the subject, truancy, textbooks availability and accessibility, libraries, practical laboratory, meals provision and many other factors.

Students' academic performance is one of the important factors in higher education that pose major concern to the students, teachers, parents, school administrators, the government and the society at large, because the quality of workforce of a given country is directly related to the quality of higher education in that country. Academic performance is the measurement of progress and success that one is able to attain as a student after years of

varying learning experiences (Ogheneakoke, Obro & Benike, 2019). According to Hristov et al. (2023), it encompasses students' ability to learn, understand, and apply knowledge, skills, and concepts within a specific academic discipline or course. It serves as an indicator of a student's mastery of subject matter, and their level of engagements and efforts in their studies measured via their examination grades, test scores and other continuous assessments to ascertain their overall accomplishments in schools. In a university context, students' academic performance refers to the extent to which students achieve their educational goals and demonstrate mastery of subject matter, typically measured through grades, test scores, and overall academic accomplishments evident in their Cumulative Grade Point Average.

It is crucial to enhance and improve students' academic performance in schools because it helps students achieve their educational goals and prepare for their future careers, and it also aids institutions in demonstrating their effectiveness in teaching and learning to contribute to a well-educated and skilled workforce in the society. Kada et al (2025) opined that teachers, parents, and educational institutions use academic performance data to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses, tailor instructional support, and track students' progress over time. To the students, academic performance can be a source of motivation, recognition, and future opportunities such as scholarships, awards, and admission into higher programmes. Opinion varies as to why some students excel academically while others perform poorly. Researchers like Atubi (2024), Osah, Uwaifo and Obro (2025), have made several attempts using indices such as community resources, ICT, learners' attitudes, entry mode, school type, teaching methods, school location, instructional materials, teachers' qualifications, family background, learning difficulties, loss of learning interests and unhealthy lifestyle to unravel this performance discrepancy, but the problem still persists most especially among undergraduates in universities.

An undergraduate is a student who is pursuing his or her first degree at a university or college, typically a bachelor's degree. At the undergraduate level, students are expected to participate actively in lectures, seminars, group activities, presentations, discussions and other academic activities. These activities require students to interact with their lecturers and fellow students and to express their ideas confidently. However, not all students are able to participate effectively in such academic and social situations. Some students experience persistent fear, shyness, avoidance and concern about being judged negatively by others. Such experiences may be associated with social anxiety disorder and may have implications for their academic activities and performance.

Social anxiety disorder is a situation whereby an individual is afraid of interacting socially, appearing incompetent and being negatively judged by others. This includes fear of public speaking, eating or taking a test in the presence of others, talking to authority figures, interacting with the opposite sex, making complaints, becoming the centre of attraction, entering a room where others are already seated, expressing disagreement or disapproval to strangers and using public bathrooms (Smith & Segal, 2026). It is considered a chronic pathology capable of affecting the individual negatively and promoting the development of other psychological disorders such as depression, generalized anxiety disorder and agoraphobia. It is the most common anxiety problem and the third most frequent psychiatric disorder. Low socioeconomic status, being unmarried, unemployment, low level of education, and poor social support have been identified as risk factors for social anxiety. Society's attitude towards shyness and avoidance as a measure of politeness is also an important factor associated with students' ability to build social interaction. Other factors that cause social anxiety include genetic factors, social experience, cultural experience and psychological factors.

According to Mota et al (2024), social anxiety disorder affects individuals mostly at the adolescent period and may continue into adulthood if not taken care of. It may also affect various aspects of human lives. Social anxiety disorder, if not treated or addressed, is capable of creating difficulties in the individual's interpersonal relationships, including family and social interaction, and can lead to low self-esteem and impairment in memory, perception and thinking processes. Students with social anxiety disorder may have difficulty speaking in front of a group of people and may fail or drop out of school due to fear. Students' attention to academic information may be distracted by excessive focus on their social anxiety disorder. The ability to monitor and modify communication with colleagues and teachers may be affected by fear of negative evaluation and, when participating in a seminar, socially anxious students may judge their competence poorly, which may lead to academic underachievement.

The experience of social anxiety disorder among university students may be reflected in different forms, including personal withholdment, shyness and seclusiveness. Personal withholdment may involve a student's reluctance to express personal opinions, ask questions or participate openly in academic interactions because of the fear of negative evaluation. Shyness may manifest in discomfort or hesitation when interacting with lecturers and fellow students, especially in situations requiring public speaking, presentations or classroom participation. Seclusiveness may involve withdrawal from social and academic interactions, including group discussions, study groups and other collaborative learning activities. These manifestations may limit students' opportunities to benefit from classroom interaction and peer support.

The individuals with early onset of social anxiety are also at risk of developing depression or alcoholism (Maulidiena (2022)). It also affects the occupational, educational and social affairs of the individual. Guo et al (2024) averred that social anxiety strongly relates with adolescents' social adjustment, social interaction skills, social performance and social competence. Social anxiety disorder can negatively affect students' academic performance by causing them to avoid social interactions in school, leading to decreased class participation, difficulty forming study groups, and a reluctance to ask questions, ultimately hindering their learning and resulting in lower grades. This can manifest as isolation, absenteeism, and a lack of engagement in classroom activities.

Students with social anxiety disorder might avoid situations like raising their hands in class, participating in group projects, or speaking in front of peers, which limits their learning opportunities. Fear of judgment can prevent students from actively engaging in discussions and asking questions, thereby affecting their understanding of academic materials. Social anxiety disorder can also make it challenging to collaborate with peers, hindering students' ability to access academic support and diverse perspectives. The constant worry about social situations can lead to high levels of stress and anxiety, which can further impair concentration and cognitive functioning. Feeling socially isolated and judged can negatively affect self-confidence, leading to decreased motivation to succeed academically. In severe cases, students with social anxiety disorder may skip school altogether to avoid social interactions. Due to limited participation and difficulty with coursework, students with social anxiety disorder may experience lower grades and academic achievement. In extreme cases, the stress and challenges associated with social anxiety disorder may contribute to students withdrawing from their academic programmes.

According to Habeeb (2026), one of the objectives of Social Studies education is to produce individuals who would actively strive to improve and contribute to their various societies. The attainment of this goal is contingent upon equipping the students with advantageous cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects of Social Studies education, which aims to equip the learners with the process of critical thinking essentials in analysing and resolving complex problems. This is why many scholars consider Social Studies education as a discipline that facilitates students in acquiring skills and values that enable them to identify and address human concerns through meticulous analysis and reliable guidance (Eyamekware & Onyekpe, 2025). According to Onyekpe and Esegbo (2026), Social Studies serves as a practical field of study that enables students to obtain novel learning experiences, abilities, and attitudes, equipping them to effectively address the various issues encountered in life, whether on an individual basis or within a group setting. This suggests that Social Studies education is designed to equip individuals with the necessary knowledge and skills to assume a central position in society, ensuring the maintenance of social cohesion and facilitating social regeneration.

Social Studies, in its uniqueness and nature, deals with the interactions between human beings, their environments and the problems that could emerge from these interactions. Many scholars including Adam (2025), conceded that Social Studies Education is a veritable instrument for addressing social problems and promoting desirable social behaviour. This makes Social Studies education particularly relevant to the development of students' social interaction, cooperation, critical thinking and responsible participation in society. During the teaching and learning process, learners are engaged in activities that are capable of promoting the achievement of a free society.

Social Studies Education aids the learner to process the human mind from its raw state to a well-refined state. Through the transmission of Social Studies Education, members of the society are exposed to positive values such as honesty, hard work, co-operation, obedience, transparency, orderliness and sincerity, among others,

which are necessary for character and nation building (Gyamfua, 2023). Accordingly, one of the major functions of Social Studies Education is the socialization process. Social Studies Education prepares the child to be responsible and a prospective member of the society.

Achievement of the above educational objectives requires a well-articulated and sound educational system that could lead to the achievement of a society where students are able to interact, communicate and participate effectively in academic and social activities. However, when students experience social anxiety disorder, their ability to participate actively in learning situations may be affected. This may be particularly important for Social Studies undergraduates because the discipline places considerable emphasis on interaction, discussion, cooperation, critical thinking and participation in group and social situations.

Meanwhile, previous studies have largely examined various factors affecting students' academic performance, yet the problem of unsatisfactory academic performance still persists. The possible influence of social anxiety disorder, particularly in terms of personal withholdment, shyness and seclusiveness, therefore requires further investigation. It is against this background that the present study seeks to examine the relationship between social anxiety disorder and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State universities.

### Statement of Problem

In recent times, academic performance among university students has continued to attract the attention of students, lecturers, parents, university administrators and other stakeholders because of its importance to students' educational and career development. Although academic performance is influenced by several factors, students' psychological and social experiences may also affect their ability to participate effectively in teaching and learning activities.

Social Studies undergraduates are expected to participate actively in classroom discussions, seminars, group projects, presentations and other forms of academic interaction. However, some students may exhibit social anxiety disorder characterised by fear of negative evaluation, shyness, personal withholdment and seclusiveness. Students with such experiences may avoid public speaking, refrain from asking questions, hesitate to contribute to classroom discussions, withdraw from group activities and experience difficulty interacting with lecturers and fellow students. Such behaviours may reduce their exposure to important learning opportunities and academic support.

Students with social anxiety disorder are found avoiding public speaking in the classroom, participating in group discussions and presentations because of the fear of being judged negatively by others if they make mistakes. Some may also avoid social and academic situations altogether, which may result in reduced classroom participation, isolation, absenteeism and limited engagement in learning activities. It is believed that excessive focus on social anxiety could distract students' attention from academic information, while fear of negative evaluation may affect their communication with colleagues and teachers and contribute to academic underachievement. Similarly, social anxiety might be strongly related to social adjustment, social interaction skills, social performance and social competence.

Despite the possible academic implications of social anxiety disorder, the extent to which its specific manifestations, particularly personal withholdment, shyness and seclusiveness, are related to the academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State universities remains a concern. Can personal withholdment, shyness and seclusiveness affect the academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates? The present study therefore seeks to provide answers to these questions by examining the relationship between social anxiety disorder and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State universities.

### Research Questions

The following research questions were asked to guide the study:

1. What is the relationship between personal withholdment and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State universities?

2. What is the relationship between shyness and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State universities?
3. What is the relationship between seclusiveness and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State universities?

## Purpose of the Study

The study is aimed at examining the relationship between social anxiety disorder and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State universities. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Ascertain the relationship between personal withholdment and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State universities.
2. Investigate the relationship between shyness and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State universities.
3. Examine the relationship between seclusiveness and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State universities.

## Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between personal withholdment and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State universities.
2. There is no significant relationship between shyness and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State universities.
3. There is no significant relationship between seclusiveness and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State universities.

## METHODOLOGY

This study adopted correlational research design. The design allowed the researcher to examine the existing relationship between social anxiety disorder and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates without manipulating the variables. The population comprised 128 Social Studies undergraduates in 100–300 levels in Delta State-owned universities during the 2024/2025 academic session. The entire population of 128 students was used for the study because of its relatively small size. A purposive or judgemental sampling technique was used to select all the 128 Social Studies undergraduates, representing 100% of the population. This ensured that all available respondents were included in the study.

The instruments used for data collection were a structured questionnaire designed by the researcher and the students' sessional Senate-approved results. The questionnaire contained 30 items designed to measure social anxiety disorder, particularly personal withholdment, shyness and seclusiveness, while the Senate-approved results were used to determine students' academic performance. The questionnaire was subjected to face and content validation by the researchers' supervisors in the department of Social Science Education and one expert from the department of Measurement and Evaluation, Delta State University, Abraka. Their corrections and suggestions were incorporated into the final instrument. The reliability of the questionnaire was established through the test-retest method using 50 respondents outside the study area. After two weeks, the instrument was re-administered and the two sets of scores were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.76, indicating that the instrument was reliable.

Data were administered personally by the researchers after obtaining permission from the relevant lecturers and Heads of Department in Delta State owned Universities. The respondents were instructed on how to complete the questionnaire, and the completed copies were collected immediately. The students' sessional Senate-approved results were obtained from the Heads of Department. The data were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation to answer the three research questions, while linear regression analysis was used to test the

three hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

## RESULTS

### Research Question 1

What is the relationship between personal withholdment and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State Universities?

**Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient of Personal Withholdment and Academic Performance of Social Studies Undergraduates in Delta State Universities.**

| Variable                                      | N   | R     | R <sup>2</sup> | R <sup>2</sup> % | Decision              |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----|-------|----------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Personal Withholdment<br>Academic Performance | 128 | 0.179 | 0.032          | 3.2              | Positive Relationship |

Table 1 indicated the r-value of 0.179 as the relationship between personal withholdment and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State Universities. From the above table, it can be observed that the co-efficient of determination was 0.032 and the amount of contribution of personal withholdment to academic performance is 3.2%. The result revealed that there is a positive relationship between personal withholdment and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State Universities.

### Research Question 2

What is the relationship between shyness and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State Universities?

**Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient of Shyness and Academic Performance of Social Studies Undergraduates in Delta State Universities.**

| Variable                        | N   | R     | R <sup>2</sup> | R <sup>2</sup> % | Decision              |
|---------------------------------|-----|-------|----------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Shyness<br>Academic Performance | 128 | 0.246 | 0.061          | 6.1              | Positive Relationship |

Table 2 indicated the r-value of 0.246 as the relationship between shyness and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State Universities. from the above table, it can be observed that the co-efficient of determination was 0.061 and the amount of contribution of shyness to academic performance is 6,1%. The result revealed that there is a positive relationship between shyness and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State Universities.

### Research Question 3

What is the relationship between seclusiveness and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State Universities?

**Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correction Co-efficient of Seclusiveness and Academic Performance of Social Studies Undergraduates in Delta State Universities.**

| Variable                              | N   | R     | R <sup>2</sup> | R <sup>2</sup> % | Decision              |
|---------------------------------------|-----|-------|----------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Seclusiveness<br>Academic Performance | 128 | 0.232 | 0.054          | 5.4              | Positive Relationship |

Table 3 indicated the r-value of 0.232 as the relationship between seclusiveness and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State Universities. From the above table, it can be observed that the coefficient of determination was 0.054 and the amount of contribution of seclusiveness to academic performance is 5.4%. The result revealed that there is a positive relationship between seclusiveness and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State Universities.

### Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between personal withholdment and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State Universities.

**Table 4: Linear Regression Analysis of the Relationship between Personal Withholdment and Academic Performance of Social Studies Undergraduates in Delta State Universities.**

|                   | Sum of Square | df  | Mean of Square | F      | Sig   |
|-------------------|---------------|-----|----------------|--------|-------|
| <b>Regression</b> | 62.283        | 1   | 62.283         | 16.152 | 0.000 |
| <b>Residual</b>   | 570.710       | 126 | 3.856          |        |       |
| <b>Total</b>      | 632.993       | 127 |                |        |       |

$\alpha = 0.05$ ,  $R = 0.314$ ,  $R \text{ Square} = 0.098$

- a) Predictors (Constant) Personal Withholdment
- b) Dependent Variable: Academic Performance

The result in table 4 indicated the F-Value of 16.152 and a P-Value of 0.000. Testing the Null hypothesis at an alpha level of 0.05, the P-Value of 0.000 was less than the alpha level of 0.05 hence, the null hypothesis is rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis. This shows that there was a significant relationship between personal withholdment and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State Universities.

### Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between shyness and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State Universities.

**Table 5: Linear Regression Analysis of the Relationship between Shyness and Academic Performance of Social Studies Undergraduates in Delta State Universities.**

|                   | Sum of Square | df  | Mean of Square | F     | Sig   |
|-------------------|---------------|-----|----------------|-------|-------|
| <b>Regression</b> | 20.264        | 1   | 20.264         | 4.894 | 0.028 |
| <b>Residual</b>   | 612.730       | 126 | 4.140          |       |       |
| <b>Total</b>      | 632.993       | 127 |                |       |       |

$\alpha = 0.05$ ,  $R = 0.179$ ,  $R \text{ Square} = 0.032$

- a) Predictors (Constant) Shyness
- b) Dependent Variable: Academic Performance

The result in table 5 indicated the F-Value of 4.874 and a P-Value of 0.028. Testing the Null hypothesis at an alpha level of 0.05, the P-Value of 0.028 was less than the alpha level of 0.05 hence, the null hypothesis is rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis. This shows that there was a significant relationship between shyness and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State Universities.

### Hypothesis 3

There is no significant relationship between seclusiveness and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State Universities.

**Table 6: Linear Regression Analysis of the Relationship between Seclusiveness and Academic Performance of Social Studies Undergraduates in Delta State Universities.**

|                   | Sum of Square | df  | Mean of Square | F     | Sig   |
|-------------------|---------------|-----|----------------|-------|-------|
| <b>Regression</b> | 52.499        | 1   | 26.249         | 6.647 | 0.002 |
| <b>Residual</b>   | 580.494       | 126 | 3.949          |       |       |
| <b>Total</b>      | 632.993       | 127 |                |       |       |

$\alpha = 0.05$ ,  $R = 0.288$ ,  $R \text{ Square} = 0.083$

- a) Predictors (Constant) Seclusiveness
- b) Dependent Variable: Academic Performance

The result in table 6 indicated the F-Value of 6.647 and a P-Value of 0.002. Testing the Null hypothesis at an alpha level of 0.05, the P-Value of 0.002 was less than the alpha level of 0.05 hence, the null hypothesis is rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis. This shows that there was a significant relationship between seclusiveness and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State Universities.

## DISCUSSION

The finding of this study revealed that there is a positive relationship between personal withholdment and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State Universities. The result showed that personal withholdment accounted for 3.2% of the variation in academic performance. This finding implies that students' tendency to withhold themselves from expressing their views, participating in discussions, making presentations and engaging in verbal interactions may be associated with their academic performance. Personal withholdment may limit students' opportunities to participate actively in teaching and learning activities, particularly in Social Studies where discussions, presentations and group activities are important components of learning. This finding is consistent with the views of Mardiningrum and Ramadhani (2022), who asserted that personal withholdment is a widespread phenomenon among students which poses significant challenges to academic performance, particularly during oral presentations and group discussions. The finding also agrees with Kayman and Kaya (2025), who maintained that personal withholdment presents challenges to effective teaching and learning because students often experience heightened anxiety during verbal communication, especially in activities such as debates and presentations.

The study further found that there is a positive relationship between shyness and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State Universities. The result showed that shyness accounted for 6.1% of the variation in academic performance. This means that the presence of shyness among students is associated with their academic performance and may influence their willingness to participate in classroom activities. Shy students may be reluctant to ask questions, contribute to classroom discussions, participate in group activities or express their opinions before their lecturers and colleagues. Such limitations may reduce their opportunities to interact with learning materials, lecturers and peers. This finding is in line with the opinion of Wang et al (2024), who observed that social exclusion may impair attention regulation, reduce persistence on difficult tasks and result in poorer performance in cognitive tests. The finding also corroborates the view of Feldman et al (2022), who found that students who experienced greater peer rejection demonstrated lower academic performance and decreased classroom participation. These views suggest that students' social experiences and level of participation may have implications for their academic engagement and achievement.

Furthermore, the finding of this study showed that there is a positive relationship between seclusiveness and academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State Universities. The result indicated that seclusiveness accounted for 5.4% of the variation in academic performance. This implies that students who tend to withdraw from social and academic interactions may experience limitations in their learning opportunities. Seclusiveness may discourage students from participating in group discussions, seeking assistance from lecturers and colleagues, joining study groups and engaging in other collaborative learning activities. The finding is consistent with the view of Stenseng et al (2022), who observed that higher levels of social withdrawal predicted lower reading abilities in subsequent years of schooling. The finding also agrees with Fenizia and Parrello

(2025), who maintained that higher levels of school belonging, including social bonds, are associated with favourable educational outcomes such as motivation, engagement and academic achievement. Therefore, the finding suggests that social connectedness and active participation in the university learning environment may be important for students' academic development, while excessive withdrawal may limit access to academic and social support.

## CONCLUSION

The study revealed that personal withholdment has a positive relationship with academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates in Delta State Universities. This suggests that withholding oneself from expressing views and participating in academic activities may affect students' learning experiences. The study also found that shyness has a positive relationship with academic performance, indicating that shyness may influence students' classroom participation and interaction with lecturers and peers. Furthermore, seclusiveness has a positive relationship with academic performance, suggesting that withdrawal from social and academic activities may limit students' access to learning and social support. Overall, the study concludes that personal withholdment, shyness and seclusiveness are related to the academic performance of Social Studies undergraduates.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Social Studies lecturers should create supportive classroom environments that encourage students to express their views, ask questions and participate actively in academic activities.
2. University authorities should organize programmes that build students' confidence through group discussions, presentations, seminars and peer-learning activities to reduce shyness.
3. Lecturers should encourage collaborative learning and social interaction through group projects and study groups to reduce excessive seclusiveness and improve students' academic engagement.

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