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The Relationship Between Shyness and Interpersonal Communication Anxiety Among First-Year Students of the Faculty of Psychology at Universitas Medan Area

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between shyness and interpersonal communication anxiety among first-year students at the Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Medan Area. Using a quantitative correlational design, samples were collected via disproportionate stratified random sampling. The research population comprised 311 students, from whom a sample of 167 participants was drawn. The research instruments included two scales: an Interpersonal Communication Anxiety Scale consisting of 65 statements (reliability of 0.745) and a Shyness Scale also with 61 statements (reliability of 0.741). Data analysis utilizing Pearson's product-moment correlation yielded an rxy value of 0.828 with a significance level of $p < 0.05$ (0.000). These findings indicate a significant positive relationship between shyness and interpersonal communication anxiety among first- year students at Universitas Medan Area, thus supporting the study's hypothesis.

INTRODUCTION

University students are individuals undergoing a transitional phase from secondary education to higher education, characterized by broader social interactions and increased academic demands. This transition is particularly challenging for first-year students, especially those coming from different regions, as they must adapt to new social, cultural, and academic environments. However, this adaptation process is often hindered by internal factors such as lack of self-confidence, anxiety, and shyness, which can significantly affect their ability to engage in effective interpersonal communication.

Interpersonal communication plays a crucial role in students' academic and social lives, as it supports collaboration, participation in discussions, and the clear expression of ideas. In higher education settings, students are required to actively engage in presentations, group work, and interactions with lecturers, making communication competence an essential skill. Nevertheless, many students experience communication apprehension, defined as anxiety or fear associated with real or anticipated communication situations (McCroskey, 2009). Empirical data indicate that a significant proportion of students experience anxiety in communication contexts, particularly during public speaking and classroom interactions, which can hinder both academic performance and social integration.

One of the key psychological factors influencing interpersonal communication anxiety is shyness. Shyness is generally understood as a tendency to feel uncomfortable, inhibited, or awkward in social interactions, particularly with unfamiliar individuals (Cheek & Buss). Individuals with high levels of shyness often experience negative self-evaluation, fear of being judged, and a tendency to avoid social interaction. These characteristics are closely associated with the emergence of communication anxiety, which manifests in cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses such as nervousness, avoidance, and lack of confidence in communication situations.

Although previous studies have consistently shown a positive relationship between shyness and interpersonal communication anxiety, most have been conducted in general student populations or in public university contexts. Limited research has specifically focused on first-year psychology students at private universities, a unique population facing dual demands: adapting to a new environment while simultaneously being expected to develop interpersonal competencies as part of their academic training. Furthermore, prior research has largely emphasized simple correlational or regression analyses, without sufficiently exploring the psychological mechanisms underlying how shyness leads to communication anxiety.

In addition, existing studies tend to treat shyness and communication anxiety as separate constructs, with limited theoretical integration. There is a lack of comprehensive models that explain the relationship between these variables through cognitive–affective processes, such as fear of negative evaluation, self-perception, and perceived lack of control in communication situations. This indicates a clear research gap in both contextual focus (specific population) and theoretical depth (mechanism-based explanation).

Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by examining the relationship between shyness and interpersonal communication anxiety among first-year students of the Faculty of Psychology at Universitas Medan Area. This research not only analyzes the statistical relationship between variables but also offers a conceptual framework that integrates personality and communication theories to explain the psychological mechanisms underlying this relationship.

Conceptually, shyness is positioned as a predisposing trait that influences cognitive and affective processes in social interaction. Individuals with high levels of shyness tend to develop

negative self-evaluations, heightened fear of negative judgment, and a sense of low perceived control in communication situations. These cognitive–affective processes subsequently generate anxiety responses, which manifest as interpersonal communication anxiety. Thus, the relationship between shyness and communication anxiety is not merely linear, but operates through psychological mechanisms involving perception, emotion, and behavior.

By focusing on a specific, underexplored population, integrating theoretical perspectives, and adopting a more nuanced analytical approach, this study is expected to contribute to the development of psychological and communication research, particularly in understanding student adjustment in higher education contexts.

METHODS

The research approach employed in this study is quantitative. The population of this study consists of 311 first-semester Psychology students at Universitas Medan Area. The sample size comprises 167 students, determined using the Isaac and Michael table with a 5% margin of error. Disproportionate stratified random sampling was selected as the sampling technique because the population is stratified but not proportionally distributed (Sugiyono, 2017). Data were collected using two Likert-type scales, namely the Interpersonal Communication Anxiety Scale and the Shyness Scale. The Interpersonal Communication Anxiety Scale was developed based on the three aspects identified by Burgoon and Ruffner (as cited in Arnani, 2020), namely unwillingness, unrewarding, and uncontrolled. Meanwhile, the Shyness Scale was constructed based on the four aspects proposed by Henderson and Zimbardo (as cited in Afandi, Nurfhayati, & Hasiana, 2014): physiological, cognitive, affective, and behavioral.

Both instruments were tested for validity and reliability to ensure measurement accuracy and consistency. Validity refers to an instrument's ability to accurately measure what it is intended to measure (Ramadhan et al., 2024), while reliability indicates the consistency of measurement results when the same instrument is used repeatedly. Valid and reliable instruments are essential to ensure that the research data are trustworthy.

This study employed the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient for data analysis. The Pearson product-moment correlation is used to determine the relationship between two variables measured on an interval or ratio scale. This correlation analysis also requires that both variables have a normal distribution (Machali, 2021). Data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 22. Before conducting the correlation analysis, normality and linearity assumptions were tested.

The normality test examines whether the independent, dependent, or both variables follow a normal distribution within the regression model. According to Machali (2021), data are considered normally distributed if the significance probability value (sig.) is greater than 0.05, whereas data are considered not normally distributed if the sig. value is less than 0.05. Meanwhile, the linearity test is conducted to determine whether the relationship between the two variables is linear. Priyatno (2018) explains that if the p-value is less than 0.05, a linear relationship exists between the variables; conversely, if the p-value is greater than 0.05, the relationship is considered non-linear.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Try-Out Implementation

The research try-out was conducted on April 14, 2025, at the Faculty of Psychology, Universitas HKBP Nommensen, involving a sample of 100 students. The distribution of the instruments was carried out offline in classroom settings using two types of scales:

1. *Interpersonal Communication Anxiety Scale*

The Interpersonal Communication Anxiety Scale initially consisted of 80 items. Item validity testing was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics 22 for Windows. The results of the validity test indicated that 65 items were valid and 15 items were invalid and therefore excluded. The valid items included item numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 51, 52, 53, 55, 58, 59, 60, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 69, 70, 72, 73, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, and 80. These items met the minimum validity coefficient of 0.30 and were therefore considered valid.

Item validity was assessed using the Corrected Item–Total Correlation method, with items considered valid if the correlation coefficient reached at least 0.30. Reliability testing was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha, resulting in a reliability coefficient of 0.745. Therefore, the Interpersonal Communication Anxiety Scale was deemed reliable and suitable for use in data collection. A detailed summary of valid and invalid items is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Valid and Invalid Items of the Interpersonal Communication Anxiety Scale

No	Aspect	Statement Items: Favorable (Valid)	Statement Items: Favorable (Dropped)	Statement Items: Unfavorable (Valid)	Statement Items: Unfavorable (Dropped)	Total Valid Items
1.	Unwillingness	5, 9, 12, 22, 37, 42, 72, 78, 80	11, 13, 24, 56, 57, 71, 74	7, 8, 10, 17, 20, 25, 29, 32, 39, 40, 47, 48, 52, 53, 59, 77	-	25
2.	Unrewarding	27, 35, 36, 41, 51, 58	26, 43	1, 3, 14, 15, 16, 46, 49, 65, 75, 76	44, 54, 61, 68	16
3.	Uncontrol	18, 19, 21, 31, 33, 38, 45, 60, 66, 69, 70, 73	34, 50	2, 4, 6, 23, 28, 30, 55, 62, 63, 64, 67, 79	-	24
	Total	**27**	**11**	**38**	**4**	**65**

2. *Shyness Scale*

The Shyness Scale initially consisted of 80 items. Validity testing was also conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics 22 for Windows. The results indicated that 61 items were valid and 19 items were invalid. The valid items included numbers 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 37, 38, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 59, 60, 61, 63, 64, 67, 69, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 79, and 80. These items achieved a minimum validity coefficient of 0.30 and were therefore considered valid.

Validity was assessed using the Corrected Item–Total Correlation method, while reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.741. Accordingly, the

Shyness Scale was deemed reliable and appropriate for use as a data-collection instrument. Detailed results of valid and invalid items are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of Valid and Invalid Items of the Shyness Scale

No	Aspect	Statement Items: Favorable (Valid)	Statement Items: Favorable (Dropped)	Statement Items: Unfavorable (Valid)	Statement Items: Unfavorable (Dropped)	Total Valid Items
1.	Physiological	3, 22, 38, 41	7, 57, 65	72, 76	39, 40	6
2.	Cognitive	8, 19, 24, 35, 37, 42, 44, 52, 61, 71, 75	1, 5, 78	12, 26, 43, 48, 53, 54, 59	36, 47, 68	18
3.	Affective	4, 6, 23, 27, 31, 33, 79	15, 20, 46, 58, 66	21, 28, 49, 51, 56, 60, 77	62, 70	14
4	Behavior	2, 9, 10, 13, 14, 25, 34, 63, 69, 73, 74, 80	-	11, 16, 18, 29, 30, 32, 45, 50, 55, 64, 67	17	23
	Total	**34**	**11**	**27**	**8**	**61**

Research Implementation

The main study was conducted on September 29, 2025, involving 167 first-year students of the Faculty of Psychology at Universitas Medan Area. Data collection was carried out offline in classroom settings using Likert-type scales to measure Interpersonal Communication Anxiety and Shyness. The Interpersonal Communication Anxiety Scale comprised 65 items, while the Shyness Scale comprised 61 items. Both scales were reconstructed and renumbered following the try-out phase. The revised item numbering is presented in Table 3 for the Interpersonal Communication Anxiety Scale and Table 4 for the Shyness Scale.

Table 3. Revised Item Numbering of the Interpersonal Communication Anxiety Scale After the Try-Out

No	Interpersonal Communication Anxiety Measurement	Statement Items: Favorable	Statement Items: Unfavorable	Total
1.	Unwillingness	5, 9, 11, 20, 32, 37, 58, 63, 65	7, 8, 10, 15, 18, 22, 25, 28, 34, 35, 40, 41, 44, 45, 48, 62	25
2.	Unrewarding	23, 30, 31, 36, 43, 47	1, 3, 12, 13, 14, 39, 42, 53, 60, 61	16
3.	Uncontrol	16, 17, 19, 27, 29, 33, 38, 49, 54, 56, 57, 59	2, 4, 6, 21, 24, 26, 46, 50, 51, 52, 55, 64	24
	Total	**27**	**38**	**65**

Data Analysis

Table 4. Revised Item Numbering of the Shyness Scale After the Try-Out

No	Shyness Measurement	Statement Items: Favorable	Statement Items: Unfavorable	Total
1.	*Physiological*	2, 16, 31, 32	54, 58	6
2.	*Cognitive*	5, 14, 18, 29, 30, 33, 35, 41, 48, 53, 57	9, 20, 34, 37, 42, 43, 46	18
3.	*Affective*	3, 4, 17, 21, 25, 27, 60	15, 22, 38, 40, 45, 47, 59	14
4.	*Behavior*	1, 6, 7, 10, 11, 19, 28, 49, 52, 55, 56, 61	8, 12, 13, 23, 24, 26, 36, 39, 44, 50, 51	23
	Total	**34**	**27**	**61**

Data analysis in this study employed the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation technique in IBM SPSS Statistics 22 for Windows. This technique was applied to identify the relationship between shyness and interpersonal communication anxiety among first-year students at Universitas Medan Area. The research sample consisted of 167 students, drawn from a population of 311. The sample size was determined based on the Isaac and Michael table, which recommends this number for a population of 311 individuals.

Descriptive Analysis of Research Data

Descriptive statistical analysis was used to characterize the research data, including minimum and maximum scores, mean values, and standard deviations.

a. Hypothetical and Empirical Data Description of Interpersonal Communication Anxiety

The Interpersonal Communication Anxiety Scale consisted of 65 items with four response options scored from 1 to 4. Therefore, the minimum and maximum possible scores ranged from 65 to 260. The hypothetical mean was calculated as (65 + 260) / 2, yielding 162.5. The hypothetical standard deviation was calculated as (260 − 65) / 6, yielding 32.5.

Based on questionnaire responses, the empirical mean score for interpersonal communication anxiety was 152.754, with a standard deviation of 30.281. A comparison between empirical and hypothetical data is presented in Table 8.

Table 5. Comparison of Hypothetical and Empirical Data of Interpersonal Communication Anxiety

Variable	Empirical				Hypothetical			
	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Interpersonal Communication Anxiety	65	242	152.754	30.281	65	260	162.5	32.5

The analysis indicates that the empirical mean (152.754) is lower than the hypothetical mean (162.5), suggesting that the level of interpersonal communication anxiety among the research participants is lower than that of the general population. The participants were classified into three categories: low, moderate, and high. The categorization criteria are presented in Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6. Categorization of Interpersonal Communication Anxiety Scores

$X < (\mu - 1\sigma)$	Low
$(\mu - 1\sigma) \leq X < (\mu + 1\sigma)$	Moderate
$X \geq (\mu + 1\sigma)$	High

In this study, the hypothetical standard deviation was calculated as $\sigma = (260 - 65) / 6 = 32.5$, and the hypothetical mean as $\mu = (65 + 260) / 2 = 162.5$. Based on these calculations, the following score categories were obtained: $X < (162.5 - 32.5) = X < 130$, $(162.5 - 32.5) \leq X < (162.5 + 32.5) = 130 \leq X < 195$, and $X \geq (162.5 + 32.5) = X \geq 195$. The categorization is presented more clearly in the following table.

Table 7. Categories of Interpersonal Communication Anxiety Scores

Guideline	Score	Category	Frequency	Percentage
$X < (\mu - 1\sigma)$	$X < 130$	Low	33	19.8%
$(\mu - 1\sigma) \leq X < (\mu + 1\sigma)$	$130 \leq X < 195$	Moderate	122	73.1%
$X \geq (\mu + 1\sigma)$	$X \geq 195$	High	12	7.2%
Total			**167**	**100%**

The table above shows that of the 167 respondents involved in this study, 33 students (19.8%) demonstrated low levels of interpersonal communication anxiety. A total of 122 students (73.1%) showed moderate levels of interpersonal communication anxiety, while 12 students (7.2%) demonstrated high levels of interpersonal communication anxiety.

b. Hypothetical and Empirical Data Description of Shyness

The shyness scale consists of 61 items with four response options, each scored from one to four. Therefore, the minimum and maximum possible scores range from 61 × 1 to 61 × 4, namely 61 to 244. The expected (hypothetical) mean score was calculated using the formula (61 + 244) / 2, resulting in a value of 152.5. The hypothetical standard deviation was calculated as (244 − 61) / 6, yielding 30.5. Based on the questionnaire responses, the empirical mean score for shyness was 148.047 with a standard deviation of 24.028.

Table 8. Comparison of Empirical and Hypothetical Data of Shyness

Variable	Empirical				Hypothetical			
	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Shyness	76	226	148.047	24.028	61	244	152.2	30.5

The results of the shyness scale analysis indicate that the empirical mean (148.047) is lower than the hypothetical mean (152.5). This suggests that the level of shyness among the research participants is lower than that of the general population. The subjects were classified into three categories: low, moderate, and high. The classification is presented in the following table.

Table 9. Data Categorization

$X < (\mu - 1\sigma)$	Low
$(\mu - 1\sigma) \leq X < (\mu + 1\sigma)$	Moderate
$X \geq (\mu + 1\sigma)$	High

In this study, the hypothetical standard deviation was calculated as σ = (244 − 61) / 6 = 30.5, and the hypothetical mean was calculated as μ = (61 + 244) / 2 = 152.5. Based on these calculations, the score categories were determined as follows: X < (152.5 − 30.5) = X < 122, (152.5 − 30.5) ≤ X < (152.5 + 30.5) = 122 ≤ X < 183, and X ≥ (152.5 + 30.5) = X ≥ 183. The categorization is presented more clearly in the following table.

Table 10. Categories of Shyness Scores

Guideline	Score	Category	Frequency	Percentage
$X < (\mu - 1\sigma)$	$X < 122$	Low	21	12.6%
$(\mu - 1\sigma) \leq X < (\mu + 1\sigma)$	$122 \leq X < 183$	Moderate	138	82.6%
$X \geq (\mu + 1\sigma)$	$X \geq 183$	High	8	4.8%
Total			**167**	**100%**

The table above shows that among the 167 respondents, 21 students (12.6%) demonstrated low levels of shyness, 138 students (82.6%) moderate levels, and 8 students (4.8%) high levels.

Results of Assumption Testing

Assumption testing was conducted to ensure that the data used were valid, reliable, and that the estimation results were trustworthy. In this study, the assumption tests included normality testing and linearity testing.

a. Normality Test

The normality test was conducted to determine whether the data were normally distributed, which is assumed to represent a larger population. The criterion used was that the data were normally distributed if the significance value (p) was> 0.05, and not normally distributed if (p) was < 0.05. In this study, the normality of both variables was assessed using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test.

The results showed that interpersonal communication anxiety was normally distributed, with a KS-Z coefficient of 0.059 and a two-tailed significance value of 0.200 (one-tailed Sig. = 0.100), all of which were greater than 0.05. Similarly, the shyness variable also showed a normal distribution, with a KS-Z coefficient of 0.055 and a two-tailed p-value of 0.200 (one-tailed p-value = 0.100), both of which were greater than 0.05.

Table 11. Normality Test Results of Interpersonal Communication Anxiety

Variable	SD	KS-Z	Sig.	p	Remarks
Interpersonal Communication Anxiety	30.281	0.059	0.200	p > 0.05	Normally Distributed

Table 12. Normality Test Results of Shyness

Variable	SD	KS-Z	Sig.	p	Remarks
Shyness	24.028	0.055	0.200	p > 0.05	Normally Distributed

b. Linearity Test

The linearity test assesses whether there is a significant linear relationship among the variables under investigation. In the context of the relationship between interpersonal communication anxiety and shyness, the correlation is considered linear if the p-value < 0.05. Conversely, if the p-value > 0.05, the relationship is considered non-linear. Table 16 shows that the two variables have a linear relationship. The table indicates a significance value of 0.000; therefore, the linearity test meets the requirement of a linear relationship.

Table 13. Linearity Test Results

Variable	F	Sig.	Remarks
Interpersonal Communication Anxiety and Shyness	410.698	0.000	There is a Linear Relationship

Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis testing was conducted to determine whether shyness is associated with interpersonal communication anxiety. It was hypothesized that higher levels of shyness would be associated with greater interpersonal communication anxiety among students. Therefore, the Pearson Correlation test was applied in accordance with the research hypothesis.

Based on the table above, the correlation analysis results show that the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was 0.828 with a significance value (p) of 0.000 (p < 0.05). This indicates a positive, statistically significant relationship between the two variables, with a strong strength of association.

Table 14. Correlation Between Shyness and Interpersonal Communication Anxiety

Analysis	Pearson Correlation	Significance (p)
Correlation	0.828	0.000

Effective Contribution

The table below shows that the obtained R-squared value was 0.686. This indicates that shyness contributes 68.6% to interpersonal communication anxiety, while other factors influence the remaining 31.4%.

Table 15. Effective Contribution

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.828	0.686	0.684	13.49799

The findings of this study reveal a strong positive relationship between shyness and interpersonal communication anxiety ($r = 0.828$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that shyness is not merely a peripheral trait but a central psychological factor influencing students' communication experiences. The strength of this correlation suggests that, within the context of first-year university students, shyness operates as a dominant predictor of communication-related anxiety. This relationship appears stronger than in several previous studies, which may be attributed to the specific characteristics of the sample: first-year psychology students simultaneously undergoing academic, social, and environmental transitions. These layered demands likely intensify the psychological impact of shyness, thereby amplifying communication anxiety.

From a theoretical perspective, the strong relationship between shyness and interpersonal communication anxiety can be explained through cognitive–affective mechanisms. Individuals with high levels of shyness tend to engage in negative self-evaluation, such as perceiving themselves as less competent or fearing negative judgment from others. This aligns with the concept of fear of negative evaluation, which plays a central role in generating anxiety in social and communication contexts. These cognitive distortions activate affective responses, such as nervousness, tension, and anticipatory anxiety, which subsequently manifest in behavioral patterns, including avoidance, reduced participation, and withdrawal from communication situations.

Furthermore, this relationship can also be understood through the lens of perceived communication control. Shy individuals often report a lower sense of control over communication situations, leading to feelings of uncertainty and helplessness when interacting with others. This lack of perceived control increases the likelihood of anxiety, particularly in formal or evaluative contexts such as classroom discussions and presentations. In this sense, shyness functions as a predisposing trait, while interpersonal communication anxiety emerges as a situational response mediated by cognitive and emotional processes.

The findings also support and extend existing theories by demonstrating that the relationship between shyness and communication anxiety is not purely linear, but operates through an integrated psychological process involving cognition (negative beliefs), affect (anxiety), and behavior (avoidance). This contributes to the literature by providing a more nuanced explanation of how and why shyness translates into communication anxiety, particularly within a transitional educational context.

In addition, the high R-squared value (0.686) indicates that shyness explains a substantial proportion of variance in interpersonal communication anxiety. However, the remaining 31.4% suggests the presence of other influencing factors, such as communication skills, social support, past communication experiences, personality traits (e.g., introversion), and environmental factors such as classroom climate. This highlights that while shyness is a significant predictor, interpersonal communication anxiety is a multidimensional construct that requires broader consideration in future research.

From a contextual standpoint, the dominance of moderate levels of both shyness and communication anxiety among students suggests that these phenomena are relatively normative during the first year of university. However, when shyness reaches higher levels, it may develop into a maladaptive pattern that hinders academic participation and social integration. This is particularly critical in psychology students, who are expected to develop strong interpersonal competencies as part of their professional identity. The mismatch between these expectations and students' psychological readiness may further exacerbate anxiety.

Theoretically, this study contributes to integrating personality theory (shyness as a trait) and communication theory (communication anxiety as a situational response) by proposing a mechanism-based understanding of their relationship. It reinforces the view that personality traits cannot be fully understood without considering the situational contexts in which they are activated. Practically, the findings imply that interventions aimed at reducing communication anxiety should not only focus on communication skills training but also address underlying cognitive distortions and emotional regulation associated with shyness.

In sum, this study demonstrates that the strong relationship between shyness and interpersonal communication anxiety is driven by interconnected cognitive, affective, and behavioral mechanisms, particularly within the context of early university adjustment. These findings provide both theoretical and practical insights into how students experience and manage communication challenges, and underscore the importance of developing integrated psychological and educational interventions.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion of this study on the relationship between shyness and interpersonal communication anxiety among first-year students of the Faculty of Psychology at Universitas Medan Area, it can be concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between the two. This finding is consistent with theoretical frameworks suggesting that shyness is an important internal factor contributing to the development of interpersonal communication anxiety.

The positive relationship indicates that higher levels of shyness are associated with higher levels of interpersonal communication anxiety, and vice versa. Shyness contributes substantially as a factor influencing interpersonal communication anxiety. However, it should be noted that many other factors also affect interpersonal communication anxiety but were not examined in this study. Conversely, interpersonal communication anxiety also plays a significant role in reinforcing and maintaining shyness among students.

Thus, it can be concluded that shyness and interpersonal communication anxiety have a strong, reciprocal relationship, underscoring the importance of addressing both factors in efforts to support first-year students' social and academic adjustment.

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