

**SOCIAL SHYNESS AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO POOR CLASSROOM  
PARTICIPATION IN FEMALE SECONDARY STUDENTS**

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ABSTRACT	KEYWORDS
<p>This research aims to uncovering the level of social shyness in secondary and preparatory female students of Al-Kawthar Girls' High School in Qurna District, Basra, and revealing the relationship between social shyness and the level of participation. To achieve these aims, a measure of social shyness has been developed based on Zimbardo's (1977) theory of social shyness, taking into account certain components of the theory, including the psychological component, the physiological component, the cognitive component, and the emotional component. Therefore, the scale in its final form included 22 items across the components. Alternative replies have been assigned five options: always apply - often apply - sometimes apply - rarely apply - never apply. Scores were given between (5-1), thus ranging from a total scale score (110-22) to a hypothetical average score of (66). The final application procedure for the scale was conducted on 100 respondents from 24/10/2023 to 30/10/2023. The how-to-answer instructions and the research aims were explained. The required data on social shyness and class participation were obtained from the respondents in collaboration with the distinguished school administration. After obtaining a class participation score for the sample and statistically processing data using Spearman's correlation coefficient and T-test, the study found that after achieving the first aim, which is uncovering the level of social shyness, the mean and standard deviation were used. The mean is (84), the standard deviation is (6.3), and the hypothetical mean is (66). Using the T-test equation on the respondents' replies, the calculated T-test value was 0.0077 and the tabulated T-test value was 1.96. To achieve the second aim, which is revealing the relationship between social shyness and female students' participation, Spearman's correlation coefficient was used to calculate female students' grades on the scale of social shyness and their degrees in difficult participation. The correlation coefficient amounted to (0.0077), which means that there is a correlation between social shyness and class participation and that shyness negatively affects class participation. Additionally, data analysis found that 60% of female students show a lower class participation due to social shyness.</p>	<p>Social Shyness, Relationship, Classroom, Participation, secondary Students,</p>

## Introduction

Shyness is an imaginary barrier between a person and what he wants to say or do. It is like a thick veil behind which he hides fear and lack of self-confidence. If shyness takes over a person, it blinds him to the reality of his abilities and makes him the most self-deprecating person. Shyness prevents its owner from facing life, turning away from people and fearing them. He withdraws into himself, often hesitant, timid, and confused. Feelings of shyness may be mixed with elements of envy, jealousy, hatred, and malice towards others. The person afflicted with shyness is constantly trapped within himself, withdrawing into it and taking revenge on himself. (Al-Sabban, 1999: 219)

## 1.Statement of Research

Social shyness is a psychological suffering that is controlled by its owner to a degree that is paralyzed by talent and tends to have minimal production and low-impact behavior (Sharara, 1996). Every day, the individual is confronted with a new situation that requires a high psychological ability to cope with challenges and adapt to surrounding changes, which affects his life and may be the basis for the occurrence of uneven harmony (Al-Shirbeeney, 2001:33). It has been found that some male or female students do not have the ability to face challenges due to their shyness. Thus, this situation may be paralyzing the talents and confidence of these students, directly contributing to low class participation and increasing activity delays (Al-Malih, 1993:8). Therefore, shyness is a problem in itself because it causes other challenges, with negative consequences, and undesirable effects, and consequences, as confirmed by Al-Shinnawy (1997). In the same vein, psychiatrists assert that many people silently suffer from shyness for many years but ask for help only if the situation increases to the point where some problems and crises may cause it (Ghalib 1991, 140). Shame may affect the school compatibility process (Yousif & Khalifa, 2003). A student experiencing shyness lacks self-confidence, finds it difficult to integrate with their colleagues, and lacks many skills and experiences that can be gained from classmates and in social attitudes. Moreover, the consequences of shyness can manifest in class participation, leading to feelings of failure and potentially paralyzing the affected students. Therefore, it is crucial to assist students in avoiding negative emotions such as shyness, which are often associated with fear and violence. Based on these premises, this study formulates a researchable problem that is integrated into this research question: Is there a relationship between shyness and low or difficult participation?

## Significance and Necessity

Human nature is a social being, and human communication is central to the process of social interaction, given that one's relationship with others is a key characteristic of personality that plays a fundamental role in facilitating or impeding interaction. Perhaps the most important of these traits is shyness which grows during an individual's interaction with their environment (Shaqeer, 1994). Additionally, social shyness is a long-time-old phenomenon that has been debated by Epicurus and Homer. Being a social and interpersonal phenomenon, social shyness has inspired poets and writers alike (Al-Sabaawy, 2009:4). Given its complicated effects and unknown consequences, researchers and scholars have been uncertain about the very causes of social shyness (Al-Neebaal & Abu Zaid, 1909:12). All human beings possess a degree of shyness, which is necessary since the lack of shyness is psychologically considered a first or precedence. However, shyness becomes abnormal if it is severe or if it hinders personal development and social interaction (Al-Nahla, 1995:25). Social shyness is

widespread across different ages and is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, as confirmed by Zimbardo (1977). Zimbardo posited that shyness is the cause of many problems in one's life, especially when it conflicts with their ability to make friends or when they are unhappy with a social presence among others. Also, social shyness is a major reason for the inability to get high academic achievement, which affects an individual's school and university career as the affected individual becomes self-confident and speechless when asked by teachers (Al-Sabaawy 2009:4).

These negative effects of shyness may trigger low or underachievement in classes, with most shy students are shown to have less mobility, less interaction with teachers, and reluctance to answer. Also, shyness is a barrier that prevents students from participating and causes them many personal crises if they are reprimanded by teachers and ridiculed by classmates (Al-Shirbeeney, 2001:93). These indicators have been confirmed by Shaqeer (1996), who revealed that shyness develops in adolescence with a possible development earlier or later than that. These findings align with those indicated by Al-Malih, who indicated that adolescence is so critical in one's life that adolescents are dominated by confusion because they do not know what role to play (Georges, 1985:12).

Scholars and researchers have disagreed on the causes of the emergence of that emotional state, which is shyness, having been likely developed by changes in the secretion of glands, environmental factors, or others (Ghalib 1986, 4). The development of shyness at that age is as different as the concerned situations, including family, professional, or social. A study by Catil indicated that shyness at that age varies even in similar circumstances and situations. Similarly, Campbell reported similar results in a study on shyness in individuals in different attitudes and circumstances, especially in adolescents. When an individual is amid strangers and speaking is a must, his shyness is likely to be high (Khudhur, 1994:13).

## **Significance**

This study can be significant as it:

- 1.Provides a tool for measuring students' level of shame, which may contribute effectively to alleviating it
- 2.Increases theoretical knowledge of this subject and the interest of psychologists and mental health
- 3.Is concerned with an important age and study because preparatory and secondary students constitute an important sector, which must have a high personality of culture and awareness
- 4.Provides educational guides with a scale that contributes to the construction of a mentoring program to reduces students' shyness.

## **Objectives**

This paper aims to uncovering the level of social shyness in secondary and preparatory female students at Al-Kawther Secondary for Girls in Qurna, Basra, and revealing the relationship between shyness and class participation.

## **Limits**

This study is limited to the secondary female students of Al-Kawther High School in Qurna, Basra during the 2023-2024 academic year.

## Key Terms

### Psychological Definition of Social Shyness

-Zimbardo (1977) defined social shyness as a personal reaction that arises and is affirmed by the social values that belong to and are programmed for civilization. It is higher in self-directed civilizations than in community-oriented civilizations.

-Al-Dereeny (n.d.) defined social shyness as a tendency to avoid social interaction and social participation in a non-cruel manner.

-Shamsan (2004) defined social shyness as fear and confusion that a person experiences when performing a particular job.

### Procedural Definition of Social Shyness

Social shyness is the grade that a female student gets during her answer to the social shyness scale designed for this purpose.

### Class Participation

-Ouda and Ahmed Sultan (1988) defined class participation as a lack of pupils' response to direct teacher questions.

-A-Sayed and Ismail Wahieb (2001) defined class participation as students' failure to conduct oral or written classroom activities, to sit in their seats quietly, and to notice their participating classmates.

## Theoretical Framework

Below are the most prominent theories that dealt with social shyness.

### 1.Psychoanalysis Theory (Freudian Psychology)

This theory explained social shyness following egoism or narcissism. In other words, the shy person, given this point of view, is hostile and aggressive. Psychoanalysts underscored how important family experiences, especially the first five years of the child's life, are, as these years help form this phenomenon (Al-Neebal 1999:27).

### 2.Social Learning

Social learning theory attributes social shyness to anxiety, which in turn provokes various social behaviors. Although the natural character of a human being is to reduce anxiety, it is shameful that this negative emotion prevents social skills. (Pilkonis, 1977:599; Zimbardo, 1979). Thus, shyness is an learned behavior through observation and imitation. These results have been confirmed by Bandura (1977), who emphasized that most behaviors can be learned through modeling, which plays a fundamental and important role to learn these patterns (Al-Zaghloul, 2003:152).

### 3.Behaviorism

This theory considers that human behavior is only a set of habits learned or acquired by an individual during different stages of development. Behaviorists posited that shyness is the failure to learn a proper chain or learn unwanted behaviors, which might relate one's responses to new directions (Abu Atiya, 1988:102). Hence, behaviorist theories consider social shyness a personal failure to acquire or learn appropriate behavior.

## **4. Trait theory**

This theory considers that shyness is a characteristic of personality, i.e., people get shy as a result of threatened conditions. Based on this theory, there are two traits: common features believed to genetically transfer and multiple features. Social shyness has been attributed to common features, which is confirmed by the fact that if there are two shy individuals, that does not mean that they are equally shy (Allport, 1937:38).

## **5. Gilligan's Theory**

Gilligan's (1976) theory underscores the study of two types of sensation, shyness (effect of shyness) and guilt (effect of guilt). Shyness develops due to so-called narcissistic wounds. In other words, one's inability to care for himself leads him to feel inferior. Gilligan (1976) indicated that the Greek civilization was a shy one, where an ethical system of values between two basic poles whose top shyness comes as a negative value (Gilligan, 1976:155).

## **Previous Studies**

### **1. Yousif and Khalifa (2003)**

The study aimed at identifying the relationship between shyness and social compatibility between 400 Kuwaiti University students and 320 Saudi University students. This study examined sex differences in shyness and social compatibility. The study used a designed scale of social shyness and compatibility. The study found that Saudi students are more shy than Kuwaiti students. Also, there is a negative relationship between social shyness and compatibility whether among Saudi or Kuwaiti students (Yousif and Khalifa, 2003:149).

### **2. Al-Shinnawy (1997)**

This study aimed at identifying the relationship between self-esteem, anxiety, depression, and social shyness. The sample consisted of 170 Faculty of Education students distributed in the disciplines of education, kindergartens, and home economics. The study adopted Jones and Russell' scale (1982) of social shyness. The study found that there was no correlation between self-esteem, anxiety, and social shyness with regard to sex and academic major (Al-Shinnawy, 1997:39).

### **3. Fyer (1997) The Relationship between Shyness and Psychopathic Correlates**

This study aimed at finding out whether there are differences between males and females in social shyness and psychopathic correlates. The social shyness scale and the review list of symptoms have been applied to the 210-high school student sample: 105 males and 105 females aged 15-18 years. The study reported differences between males and females in psychopathy and shyness correlates as well as an interactive sensitivity of the response to these correlates in females (Fyer, 1997:77).

### **4. Shaqeer (1996) Impact of Social Shyness on Class Participation of Teachers and Students**

This study identified some personality factors that affect students' and teachers' performances in learning settings, including shyness, classroom, and sex. The study adopted the social shyness scale. The study sample included 400 students at the Faculty of Education in Saudi Arabia. The study indicated a statistically significant correlation between students' grades on the social shyness scale and their learning grades for all females (Shaqeer, 1996: 65).

## Procedures

These are the steps followed to achieve aims and analyze data. They involve data description, sample selection, scale design, analysis procedures, and statistical means.

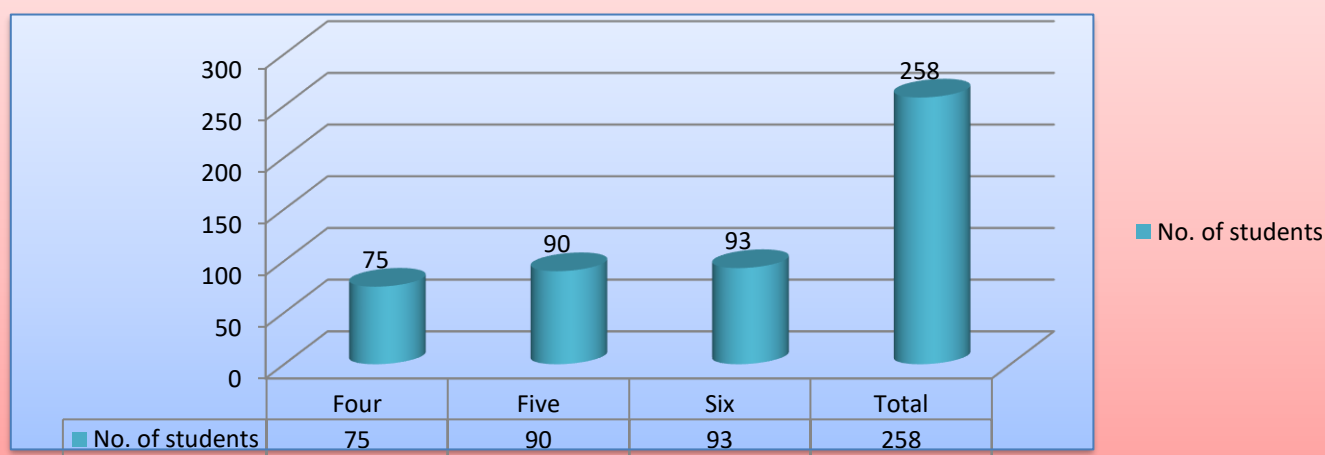
## Sample

The sample consists of secondary female students (n=258) of Al-Kawther Secondary School in Qurna, as shown in (Table 1) below.

**Table (1) : Respondents**

Class	No. of students
Four	75
Five	90
Six	93
Total	258

**chart (1) Resarch Community**



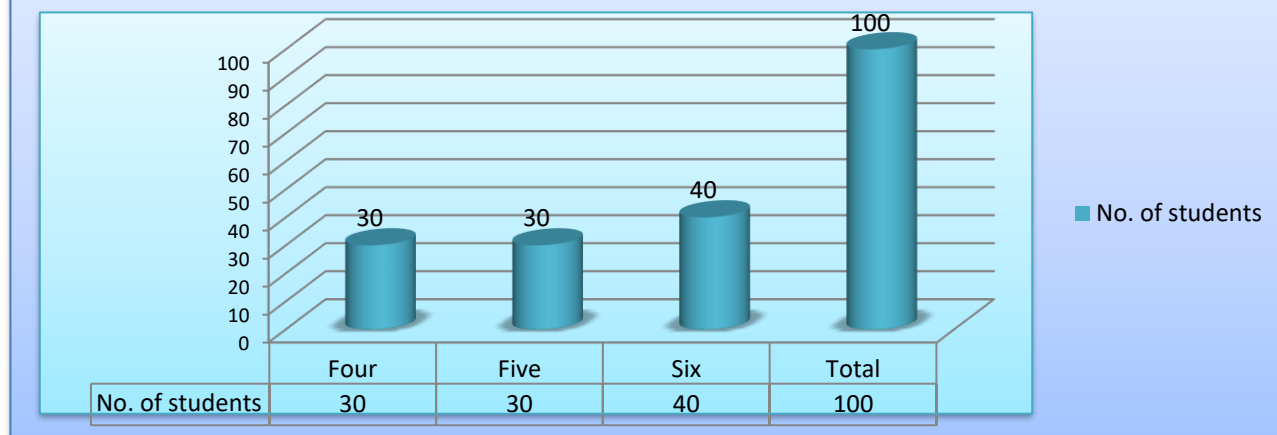
## Sample and Data

The main sample was selected using the stratified random sampling. Hence 100 female students were chosen, which is 40% of the total original sample, as shown in (Table 2).

**Table (2) : Sampling**

Class	No. of students
Four	30
Five	30
Six	40
Total	100



**Figure (2) Research sample**

### Research Design and Methodology

Achieving research objectives requires a social shyness scale that has been designed in the following steps:

#### 1. Defining the Concept and Components of Social Shyness

After reviewing previous literature and studies in this field, the definition of Zimbardo for social shyness has been adopted in theory. Thus, four main components of social shyness have been identified : Behavioral component: means avoiding social fear-forming attitudes for a shy person and obstructing his feelings and thoughts. Physiological component: means increased heart rates, dehydrated mouth, and trembling. Cognitive component: means one's ideas of attitudes which makes them unable to communicate. Emotive component: means to be confused, shy, and depressed.

To verify the validity of the definition and components used to measure social shyness, the designed scale was reviewed by eight educationalists and psychologists, who were requested to comment on the valid definition of social shyness, the valid identification of social shyness, and the all-component conceptualization of social shyness. Remarkably, those experts approved at 100% these measurements concerning the concept of social shyness.

#### 2. Scale Design

To gather items for the proposed scale of social shyness, certain previous and relevant studies and works have been reviewed. Thereafter, a 22-item scale has been designed involving 3-10 sub-items, too.

#### 3. Item Validity and Alternative Replies

To verify the items of the designed scale, the 22-item scale has been reviewed by eight educationalists and psychologists to comment on the item validity, the item reliability, and how appropriate the alternative replies are, which are (Always apply - Often apply - Sometimes apply - Rarely apply - Never apply). The experts' comments approved 22 items (100%) as well as the alternative replies.

#### 4. Scale Instructions

Instructions that are easy to read, answering honestly, leaving no blanks, writing the required information (full name and class), and marking the option that the respondent thinks applies to her with (✓) were all taken into account when the scale was made.

## 5. Pilot Test

The designed scale has been applied tentatively to identify how clear the scale instructions are, as such step helps uncover the strengths and weaknesses of the scale (Ghirabiya, 2002: 82). The pilot test was applied to 10 female students to check their understanding of lost answers and alternative replies. The pilot test revealed that the scale instructions and lost replies were clear and that the average reply time is 10 minutes.

## 6. Scale Repair

The final scale included 22 items distributed across the components discussed earlier, with each item and sub-item having an alternative reply (Always apply - Often apply - Sometimes apply - Rarely apply - Never apply). Additionally, the scale items have been graded from 1 to 5. Thus, the overall score of the scale is 110-22 degrees with a hypothetical average of 66 degrees.

## 7. Final Application

The designed scale was finally applied to the 100-student sample from 24/10/2023 to 30/10/2023. The study purpose, the study aims, and how-to-reply instructions were explained to respondents. Finally, the data required on social shyness and class participation in female secondary students were obtained in collaboration with the respective school administration.

## 8. Statistical Means

### Spearman's Coefficient

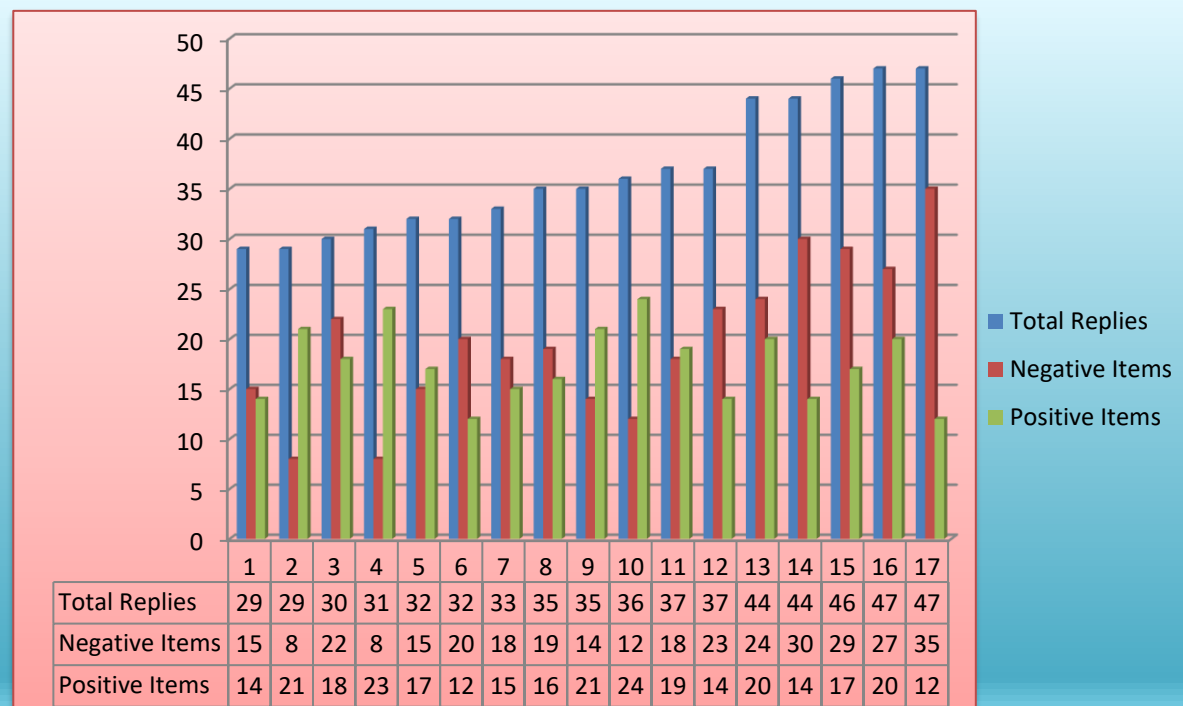
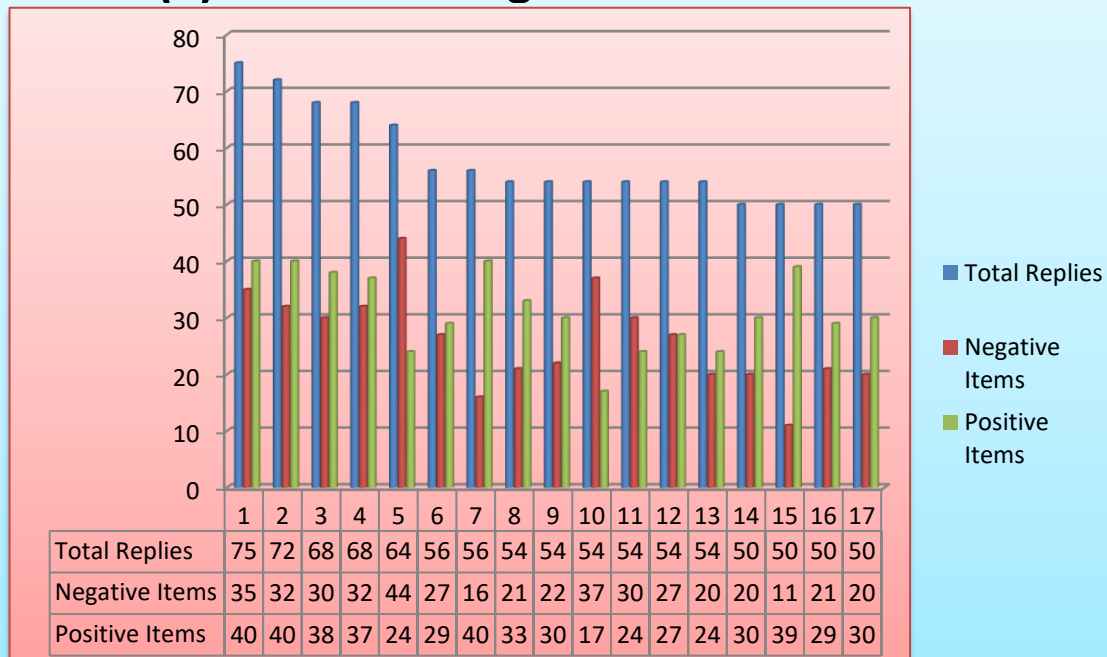
To reveal the correlation between social shyness and class participation, Spearman's rank correlation coefficient has been used.

**Table (3) : Test of Higher Items and Questionnaire Items**

Higher Score of Shyness				Lower Score of Shyness			
No.	Positive Items	Negative Items	Total Replies	No.	Positive Items	Negative Items	Total Replies
1	40	35	75	1	14	15	29
2	40	32	72	2	21	8	29
3	38	30	68	3	18	22	30
4	37	32	68	4	23	8	31
5	24	44	64	5	17	15	32
6	29	27	56	6	12	20	32
7	40	16	56	7	15	18	33
8	33	21	54	8	16	19	35
9	30	22	54	9	21	14	35
10	17	37	54	10	24	12	36
11	24	30	54	11	19	18	37
12	27	27	54	12	14	23	37
13	24	20	54	13	20	24	44
14	30	20	50	14	14	30	44
15	39	11	50	15	17	29	46
16	29	21	50	16	20	27	47
17	30	20	50	17	12	35	47



**Chart (3) shows the highest and lowest levels of**



**Table (4) : Respondents**

No.	Shyness Level	Participation Level	Shyness Level X	Participation Level Y	Total X-Y	Total Category 2
1	75	3.8	1	7	-6	36
2	72	2	2	34	-32	1.524
3	68	4.4	3	8	-5	25
4	68	3.4	3	17	-14	196
5	64	2.4	4	24	-20	400
6	56	2.8	5	23	-27	229
7	56	3.8	5	11	-6	36
8	54	4.2	6	12	-6	36
9	54	2.4	6	26	-20	400
10	54	2.8	6	20	-14	796
11	54	1.4	6	31	-25	625
12	54	2.8	6	20	-14	196
13	54	4.8	6	1	5	25
14	50	3.8	7	12	-5	25
15	50	2	7	28	-21	441
16	57	4.6	7	4	3	9
17	57	1.2	7	32	-25	625
18	47	2.4	8	23	-15	225
19	44	3.4	9	17	-8	64
20	44	4.8	9	1	8	64
21	37	3.8	10	12	-2	4
22	37	0.8	10	34	-14	196
23	36	1.8	11	30	-19	361
24	35	4.8	12	1	11	121
25	35	2.6	12	23	-11	121
26	33	4.4	13	7	6	36
27	32	2.2	13	27	-14	196
28	32	3.8	13	11	2	4
29	31	3	14	19	-5	25
30	31	4.8	14	1	13	169
31	31	4.6	14	4	10	100
32	39	4.4	15	3	12	144
33	29	4.6	15	4	11	121
34	29	4.2	15	5	10	100
<b>Total: 6.569.024</b>						

Spearman's Correlation Coefficient:

$$1 - \frac{(6.569)6}{(1 - 34^2)34}$$

Error! - 1

Error! - 1

1 - 1.0077 = 0.0077

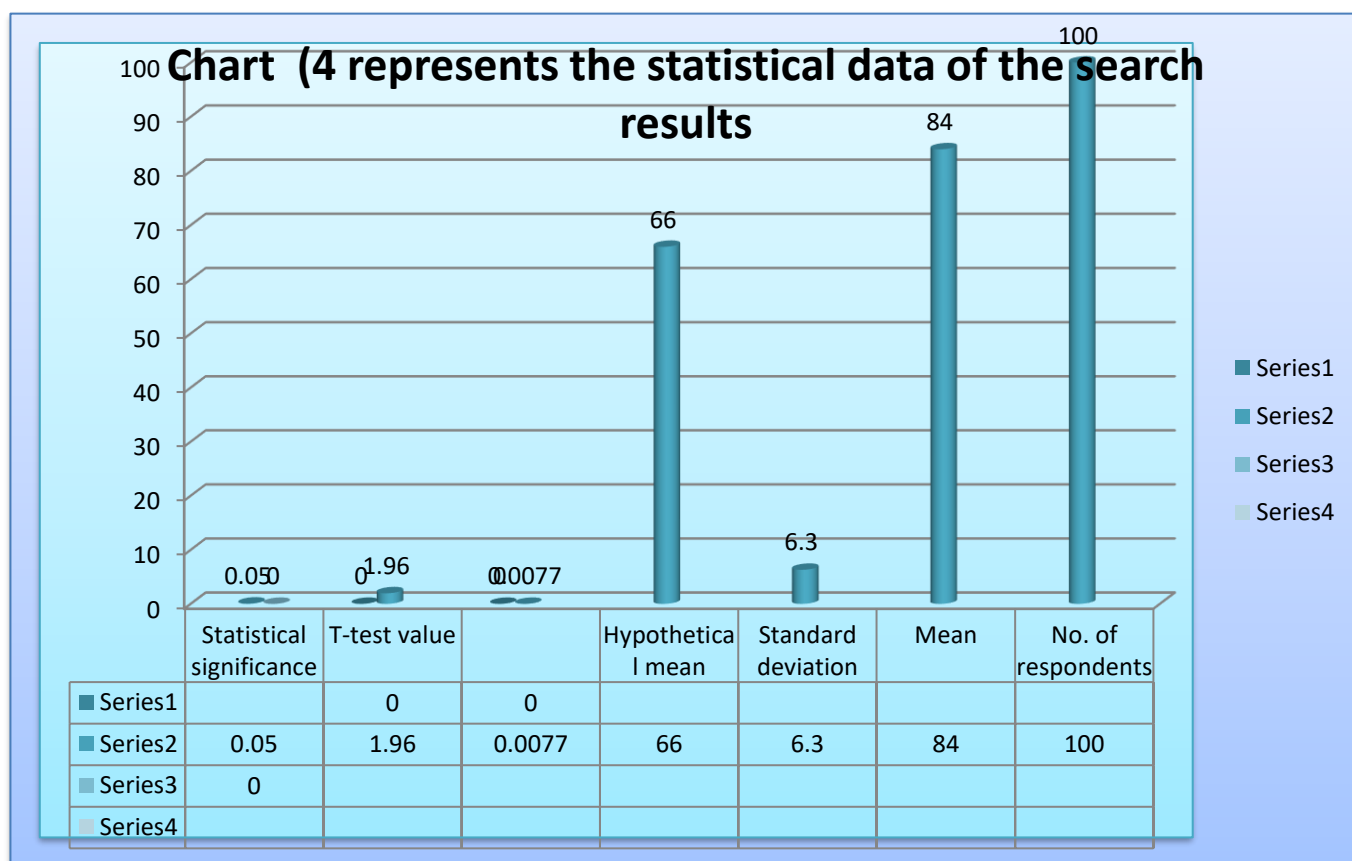
The tabulated value is  $0.77 = 0.306$  and the degree of freedom is 0.5, which indicates a strong correlation.

## Results and Discussion

In this section, data analysis will be elaborated on to draw conclusions, interpret findings, and propose recommendations. To achieve the first aim (Uncovering the level of social shyness in secondary and preparatory female students), the mean and standard deviation were used. The mean was 84, the standard deviation was 6.3, and the hypothetical mean was 66. Using the t-test equation for the sample and the respondents' replies, the calculated T-value was 0.0077 and the tabulated value was 1.96, as shown in Table (6) below.

**Table (6) : Statistical data**

No. of respondents	Mean	Standard deviation	Hypothetical mean	T-test value		Statistical significance
				Calculated T-test	Tabulated T-test	
100	84	6.3	66	0.0077	1.96	0.05
						Significant



## The Second Aim

To achieve the second aim, which is revealing the relationship between shyness and class participation, Spearman's coefficient was used to calculate female students' scores based on the social shyness scale and their scores on difficult participation. The correlation coefficient amounted to 0.0077, which suggests a relationship between social shyness and class participation and that shyness negatively affects the level of class participation. Also, statistical analysis of respondents' replies found that 60%

of female students demonstrated low class participation due to shyness, which has been indicated previously by Al-Hebbab. In addition, shyness is a factor that may increase low participation, as shy students often show common attributes, such as solitude, lack of freedom, and low interpersonal interaction. Accordingly, these factors not only hinder students' participation in class activities, but they also cause shyness and various other psychological and study-related crises and problems, especially if students are reprimanded or rebuked by teachers. Remarkably, these findings align with the results indicated by Shaqeer (1996) and Troub (1983).

## Recommendations

Proper techniques should be followed in school and at home to enhance female students' self-esteem. Appropriate guidance and counseling should be used to foster social skills required to overcome social shyness.

## Proposed Tips

1. A study can be conducted to reveal how using social skills is effective in reducing shyness in relation to class participation.
2. A study can be conducted to determine the relationship of social shyness to other variables such as self-confidence and anxiety.
3. Directive initiatives can be launched to help reduce social shyness.

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