

## **Communication Apprehension among the Communication Students of Bangladesh**

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The aim of this study is to assess the communication apprehension (CA) among the communication students of Bangladesh. The data were collected from 283 students from 10 public universities through the survey method. McCroskey's (1982) Personal Report of Communication Apprehension, also known as the PRCA-24 test was adopted for this study. The data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics of SPSS 23 software. The study explores that the mean communication apprehension score of communication students of Bangladesh is 68.12 which ascertains the medium level of CA of the students. It also says that 12.6% of students have high CA, 64.7% have medium CA and the rest 13.8% have a low level of communication apprehension. Students are more apprehensive in public communication rather than in group, meeting, and interpersonal communication. Male students have less CA than female students. This research also reveals that those students experience more CA who suffer from depression, prefer loneliness, and spend more time on social media. Communication apprehensive students prefer to sit in the back row or alongside in the classroom setting. Also, CA score is decreased when the age of the student is increased. The study also assesses that students involved with co-curricular activities have less CA than the other students. The study recommends that universities should offer more practical courses in communication to overcome communication apprehension.

*Keywords:* communication, apprehension, communication students, Bangladesh, university students

### **Introduction**

Communication apprehension (CA) is a person's level of fear or anxiety connected with actual or prospective communication with another person or group of people (McCroskey & Michael, 1986). Various levels of CA are present in every human being since the inception of human beings in the world. Though CA is an ancient phenomenon, this concept was recognized academically in the 1970s. James C. McCroskey, the father of communication apprehension, coined the concept of Communication apprehension in 1970 (McCroskey, 2009).

Two persons out of every ten suffer from communication anxiety (Watson & Bossley, 1995). CA can be generated by any of the following four types of communication: interpersonal, group, public, and mass. There are four CA types:

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trait, context, audience, and situational. Trait anxiety is regarded as a personality type that indicates an individual's propensity to experience anxiety during communication regardless of the situation, audience, or context. Context anxiety causes communication distress owing to a certain context. Psychologists believe that this is a psychological reaction triggered by a specific situation, but that it does not necessarily affect everyone in the same way. Audience anxiety occurs when a certain person or group of people impedes communication or provokes a negative response. Depending on the individual, anxiety may be triggered by familiar peers or unwanted strangers. Situational anxiety is a person's psychological response to a given scenario that may or may not be related to the person or surroundings (Witt et al., 2006).

Communication apprehension has an impact on many aspects of life, either consciously or unconsciously. Everyone is influenced by CA, and the level of anxiety people experience can have a positive or negative impact on their work performance. All people, to some extent, experience the accompanying feelings of reluctance, apprehension, and anxiety that go along with the dread of speaking in public or with others (Bodie, 2013). A natural discomfort may be experienced by some when asked to speak in front of a large crowd. Others see it as the unease they experience prior to being asked to speak in front of a group or as the unexpected rush of anxiety they get upon attending a gathering. It can also appear in social situations, such as when making an important phone call or going to the boss's office to talk about the yearly appraisal. Certain people experience communication anxiety more than others (Petry, 2016). CA has both an "external impact" on how behavior is shaped and how social connections are formed as well as an "internal impact" on the psyche and emotions of the individual (McCroskey, 1977).

### **Aims and Objectives**

Communication is studied in eleven public universities in Bangladesh. About 2,500 students are offered communication-related courses under the department of Mass Communication and Journalism (MCJ) or Communication and Journalism (CAJ) or Media Studies and Journalism (MSJ). This study measured the communication apprehension level among these students.

Different types of CA are found among human beings. This study assesses all possible CA of communication students. It also measures the CA of interpersonal, group, public, and mass communication of the students particularly. So, the aims and objectives of the study are as follows:

- To explore the communication apprehension among the communication students of Bangladesh
- To find the CA level of interpersonal, group, meeting, and public communication separately
- To investigate into the factors behind CA

## **Research Question**

No study was found focusing on the communication students of Bangladesh. Some important factors relate to CA of the students' age, sex, academic background, academic year, co-curricular activities, spending time on social media, feeling depression etc. But these factors were absent in most of the research. To address these lacks researches the following research questions were developed:

**RQ1.** Which level of CA do communication students of Bangladesh experience?

**RQ2.** Which factors are related to communication apprehension?

## **Literature Review**

Several studies were undertaken to determine the prevalence of CA among Bangladeshi students. A recent study released in 2020 titled Oral Communication Apprehension (OCA) among Undergraduate Accounting and Journalism Students in Bangladesh indicated that students in Bangladesh have a moderate degree of OCA, with a mean score of 63.79. Furthermore, it was asserted that even those with good academic credentials frequently demonstrate inadequate oral communication skills (Maliha & Hossain, 2020) According to this study, the association between time and CA fluctuates from year to year. The findings are supported by the fact that the mean Oral Communication Apprehension score of first-year students is greater than that of third-year students (Gardner & Whiting, 2005). As the curve decreases over time, it demonstrates that a university education has a positive influence by providing individuals with ample possibilities to pursue degrees beyond the OCA. They also demonstrated that journalism students have greater communication anxiety than accounting students.

In 1983, a notable study was carried out to identify the CA among pharmacy students (McCroskey, 1983b). It stated that approximately one in five pharmacy students (comparable to the general population) experience significant communication apprehension. There is considerable variation between and within schools. In different schools, the proportion of pupils with high CA ranged from 4 percent to over 30 students. These individuals are prone to become high CA pharmacists who engage in passive or inefficient interactions with patients. Additionally, more than one-third of pharmacy students identify as shy. The percentage fluctuates from 25% to 42% across different schools. Approximately forty percent of these shy people do not view their shyness as a problem, despite the fact that many of them are extremely communication apprehensive. These introverted people are also likely to avoid communication situations frequently. The greater the anxiety a communication environment produces, the less significance a student places on that form of communication. By making the significance of oral communication fit with the individual's beliefs, an attempt appears to be made to rationalize the avoidance of communication.

CA exists among doctorate students as well. In 2018, a study on the CA of doctorate students was undertaken in Malaysia. It states that despite years of training as lecturers or presenters, doctorate candidates are unable to avoid OCA

when talking with the assessment panel. In the study, linguistic challenges, a lack of understanding of the researchers' research during presentations, negative perceptions of the presentation panel, and other factors affected the OCA of international doctoral candidates. The students were unquestionably anxious about the academic presentation, and the aforementioned elements exacerbated their degree of OCA (Amiri & Puteh, 2018).

In Palestine, a 2017 study titled "Oral Communication Apprehension among English Senior Majors at Quds Open University" was conducted (Abu Taha & Abu Rezeq, 2018). At the 0.05 significance level, there was no statistically significant difference between gender and oral communication apprehension among senior English majors at Al-Quds Open University in Palestine (male or female). When communicating in a second language, communication apprehension can vary. According to a study titled "Correlation between communication apprehension and the development of communication skills in engineering students," only nine out of a hundred people demonstrate minimal communication anxiety. 42% of students have moderate communication anxiety, while 49% have severe communication anxiety (Patil & Karekatti, 2012). When communicating in their own language, the Puerto Rican pupils were substantially less anxious than when speaking English (McCroskey, 1983a).

Communication apprehension can vary when utilizing a second language. Only nine out of one hundred students, according to a study titled "Correlation between level of communication apprehension and development of communication skills in engineering students," exhibit minimal communication apprehension. 42% of students report moderate communication apprehension, while 49% have significant communication apprehension (Patil & Karekatti, 2012). The Puerto Rican students were far less apprehensive when conversing in their native language than when communicating in English (McCroskey, 1983a).

"Communication Apprehension and Level of Anxiety in the Medical Students of Rafsanjan University of Medical Sciences" is the title of a study on communication anxiety among medical students at a major medical university in southeast Iran. This study of 340 paramedical and medical students indicated that students feel anxious and reluctant to speak up in class (Hashemi & Hadavi, 2020).

In his study, "The Impact of Communication Apprehension on College Student Retention and Success," McCroskey examined the relationship between communication apprehension (CA) and academic outcomes. Unlike the previous study, this one examines the relationship between CA and academic success (McCroske & Payne, 1989). They observed that individuals with high CA had lower cumulative grade point averages, were more likely to drop out, and lacked the requisite coping strategies to adapt from the simple social contexts of their childhood homes to the usually complicated social contexts of college campuses. High CA students are distant from their professors and typically attribute their social or academic troubles to them (Kelley, 1973). Individuals with high levels of CA fear communicating with others and experience discomfort while considering doing so (McCroskey et al., 1985). High CA individuals struggle to engage in participation, attachment, and courteous behaviors with people they do not know well, both within and outside of the class (Martin, 2006).

Female students have more communication apprehension than male students do, per a study titled "Communication Apprehension and Its Relationship to Gender and College Year" carried out in the United States (Frantz et al., 2005). It shows that whereas men's mean scores were 62.62 and their standard deviations were 16.06, women's mean scores were 69.12 and theirs was 13.49. Further American research has found that women express a higher level of communication fear than males do (Aly and Islam, 2005). However, contradicting findings from another study were found. They found that men majoring in accounting have a greater CA degree than women majoring in accounting (Borzi & Mills, 2001).

The connection between time and communication anxiety has been the topic of numerous research. A 2005 study revealed no correlation between communication anxiety and educational advancement. Moreover, Frantz et al. (2005) supported this assertion (Winiiecki & Ayres, 1999). It was discovered that a person's length of service with a corporation had no influence on their CA level. Professional decision-making is associated with communication anxiety. According to a 2009 study, persons with moderate or high levels of communication anxiety had more difficulty with decision-making, commitment anxiety, and external conflicts. The connection between time and communication anxiety has been the topic of numerous research. A 2005 study revealed no correlation between communication anxiety and educational advancement. Moreover, Frantz et al. (2005) supported this assertion (Winiiecki & Ayres, 1999). It was discovered that a person's length of service with a corporation had no influence on their CA level. Professional decision-making is associated with communication anxiety. According to a 2009 study, people with moderate or high levels of communication anxiety had more difficulty with decision-making, commitment anxiety, and external conflicts (Meyer-Griffith et al., 2009).

CA has a significant impact on the profession in many ways. Those who are highly anxious find it difficult to land a good job. People with high communication apprehension typically work in lower-level positions and make less money, according to Winiiecki & Ayres (1999). An employee's job satisfaction fell as their communication anxiety rose. An employee's situational anxiety rose along with their level of communication anxiety (Byron, 2005). Job happiness and productivity are closely related. Consequently, we can say that CA can affect a person's performance at work.

There is a strong correlation between social media usage and CA. Several studies have been undertaken in this field. Recent research from 2022 indicates that those with high levels of communication anxiety are more likely to be social media addicts than those with lesser levels of communication anxiety (Awobamise, 2022). According to another study, people with some degree of communication apprehension prefer to communicate through a medium rather than face-to-face (Armstrong and Rubin, 1989). People with high degrees of social anxiety commonly utilize social media (McCord & Levinson 2014).

Similar to other personal issues, CA can be resolved in several ways. Different academic training and public speaking courses might reduce communication apprehension. According to a 2009 study titled "Effects of Instruction on Communication Apprehension and Communication Competence", classroom

instruction can alter students' levels of communication competence (CC) and communication apprehension (CA). From the course's beginning to its conclusion, CC increased while CA fell. In addition, CA with strangers increased whereas CA in groups declined between enrollment and exit (Rubin & Jordan, 1997). We were unable to locate a specific study on communication apprehension among communication students. In this research, we investigated how CA works on people who have been taught for a long time about public speaking, critical thinking, problem solving, and conflict resolution.

### **Research Methodology**

This research has been conducted with both qualitative and quantitative approach. However, quantitative data with qualitative interpretation has been presented in the table. As the aim of this research is to find out the level of communication apprehension of the students, the researcher conducts this research analyzing the data which are collected from the students. So, survey method has been used in this research. The study has been conducted on the communication students of Bangladesh. A survey-based questionnaire has been used to collect the data. The questionnaire was sent to about 1000 students in Google form through digital media. A total of 283 students from different universities filled up the Google form.

*Sampling:* Sampling is the process of selecting suitable samples for collecting data. Sampling process selects for collecting data quickly and easily for research activities. Convenient sampling method has been used to collect samples from the population. From every university a reasonable number of students participated in the study. With a 95% level of confidence, 283 out of a total of 2420 students were chosen for the study.

*Population:* Students enrolled in communication-related departments at all Bangladeshi public universities make up the research population for this study. Those departments are Mass Communication and Journalism, Communication and Journalism, Journalism and Media studies.

*Instrumentation:* The Personal Report of Communication Apprehension, also known as the PRCA-24 exam, is the most common and reliable way for establishing a person's CA level (Payton & Scott, 2013). It is the worldwide recognized method of measuring communication apprehension. Great communication specialist and father of communication apprehension Dr. James C. McCroskey developed this method. This PRCA 24 can discover the CA of group discussion, interpersonal communication, meeting communication and the CA of public speaking separately. The questionnaire was expanded to inquire about the gender, age, academic year, academic background, spending time on social media, involvement with co-curricular activities etc. of each respondent.

*Scoring:* A total CA score and four CA sub-score are calculated using the PRCA-24. The following are the scoring criteria: Group discussion: 18 - (scores for items 2, 4, & 6) + (scores for items 1, 3, & 5). Meetings: 18 - (scores for items 8, 9, & 12) + (scores for items 7, 10, & 11). Interpersonal: 18 - (scores for items

14, 16, & 17) + (scores for items 13, 15, & 18). Public Speaking: 18 - (scores for items 19, 21, & 23) + (scores for items 20, 22, & 24). All four sub scores can be put together to generate a total score. Scores may range from 24 to 120. People with very low CA have scores between 24 and 50. People with an average, medium, or moderate CA have a score ranging from 51 to 80. Individuals with high levels of CA scored more than 81.

## Analysis

### Overall Score of Communication Apprehension

Table 1. Overall Score of Communication Apprehension

N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	High CA	Medium CA	Low CA
283	27	104	68.12	21%	65%	14%

Table 1 represents the main goal of this study which is to uncover the CA score of communication students of Bangladesh. Table 1 shows that the mean score of communication apprehension of the respondents is 68.12. It denotes the medium/ average/ moderate level of communication apprehension. Individuals with a score of 24 to 50 have a very low CA. The CA is average, medium, or moderate for people with scores between 51 and 80, but high for those with values over 81. Out of 120 minimum score of CA is 27 and maximum is 104. It also expresses that out of 283 respondents 61 (21%) have a high level of CA and 39 (14%) have low level of CA. In contrast, the majority of the 183 responders (65%) have a medium level of CA.

### Score of Interpersonal, Group, Meeting and Public Communication Apprehension

Table 2. Score of Interpersonal, Group, Meeting and Public Communication Apprehension

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Interpersonal CA	283	6	29	16.96	4.189
Group CA	283	6	29	15.06	4.273
Meeting CA	283	6	30	17.25	4.872
Public CA	283	6	29	18.85	4.392

Overall CA is divided into four distinctive sub-categories which are interpersonal, group, meeting, and Public CA. Table 2 expresses the CA score of the respondents according to these four subcategories. It says that the mean score of interpersonal CA is 16.96 and the minimum and maximum score is 6 and 29 respectively with a standard deviation of 4.189. On the other hand, the mean score of group CA is 15.06 which is less than interpersonal CA. The minimum and maximum score is 6 and 29 respectively with a standard deviation of 4.273. Again, the mean score of meeting CA is 17.25 which is higher than interpersonal and

group CA. The minimum and maximum score is 6 and 30 respectively with a standard deviation of 4.872. However, among the four CA subcategories, public communication apprehension has the highest score. This score is 18.85 and the minimum and maximum score is 6 and 29 respectively with a standard deviation of 4.392.

**CA Score of the Respondents According to Academic Year**

Table 3. CA Score of the Respondents According to Academic Year

Student Year	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Level of CA			
				High	Medium	Low	Total
First year	73.15	73	13.226	23(31.50%)	46(63.01%)	4(5.48%)	73
Second year	72.10	31	12.924	6(19.35%)	22(70.97%)	3 (9.68%)	31
Third year	68.35	79	15.799	16(20.25%)	53(67.09%)	10 (12.66%)	79
Fourth year	63.04	52	17.102	8(15.38%)	29(55.77%)	15(28.85%)	52
Masters	63.00	48	15.833	8(16.67%)	30(62.50%)	10(20.83 %)	48
Total	68.12	283	15.610	61(21.55%)	183(64.66%)	39(13.78%)	283

Table 3 shows the academic year of the students and its relationship to communication apprehension. It says that there is a close connection between the academic year and the mean CA score of the respondents. The mean CA of first-year students is 73.15 and the second-year students' is 72.10. On the other hand, 68.35 is the mean CA for third-year students. Again, 63.04 is the mean CA of fourth-year students. Finally, the mean CA of master's students is 63.00. Here we can say that the CA score is decreasing gradually based on the year of the students. If we compare the high and low CA scores of first-year and fourth-year students, we will get a significant difference among them. The percentage of High CA among first-year students is 31.50. On the other hand, this percentage of fourth-year students is only 15.38. The ratio of high CA among first year students is double that of fourth year students. Again 5.84% students of first year students have low CA scores but the percentage of low CA scores of fourth year students is 28.85. Here we can see the ratio of low CA among fourth year students is five times more than that of first year students. Students of communication complete different types of communication-related courses in their university life. The improvement of CA can be the result of these courses.

**CA Score of the Respondents According to Sexual Identification**

Figure 1. CA Score of the Respondents According to Sexual Identification

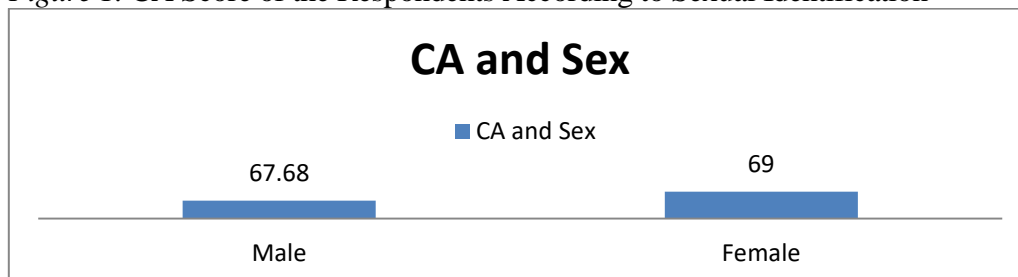




Figure 1 shows the CA state of male and female separately. Here the mean of male students is 67.68 and the mean CA of female students is 69.00. There is a difference between the mean CA of males and females. This figure portrays that female students have more CA than male students. Again, among male students 21.16% male students have high CA and 22.34% female students have high CA. The ration of low CA among male and female students is 14.29% and 12.77%. Medium level CA of female students is also higher than that of male. This figure proves that female students have more CA than male students.

### CA Score of the Respondents According to Level of Suffering Depression and Preferring Loneliness

Figure 2. CA Score of the Respondents According to Level of Suffering Depression and Preferring Loneliness

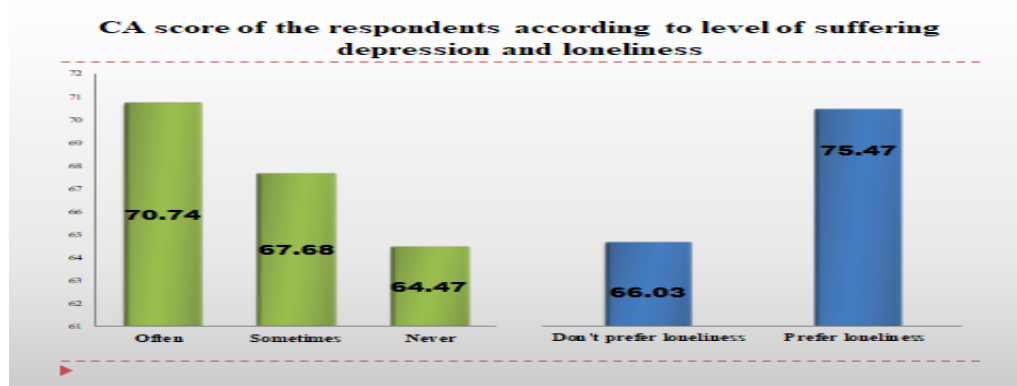


Figure 2 shows the level of suffering depression of the respondents and its relationship to communication apprehension. Among 283 respondents 26.15% respondents suffer depression most of the time, 62.54% suffer it sometimes and 11.31% respondents don't suffer depression. There are differences in suffering CA among these three categories of respondents. The people who suffer from depression most of the time have a 70.74 mean CA score. Again, 67.68 is the mean CA score of those respondents who suffer from depression sometimes But for the respondents who don't suffer from depression mean CA score is 64.47. Here is a positive relationship between depression and communication apprehension. So, we can say more depressed people have more CA. It also showed that the people who prefer to be alone most of the time have more CA (mean 75.47) than the people who don't prefer to be alone. It means that loneliness has an effect on people's communication ability. Difference of mean CA between these two categories of people is 9.44.

**Co-Curricular Activities, Childhood Talkative State and Communication Apprehension**

Table 4. Co-Curricular Activities, Childhood Talkative State and Communication Apprehension

Do you have active involvement with co-curricular activities?	Mean CA	Talkativeness in childhood	Mean CA
I have active involvement with co-curricular activities now.	63.34	Talkative in childhood	59.68
I had active involvement with co-curricular activities.	68.20	Non-talkative in childhood	69.84
I didn't have any active involvement with co-curricular activities.	74.88		

Table 4 shows that mean CA score of people who have active involvement with co-curricular activities now is 63.34 and the people who had active involvement with co-curricular activities in the past is 68.20 but the score of respondents who did not have any involvement with co-curricular activities at past is 74.88. This huge difference portrays the significant influence of co-curriculum activities to reduce the communication apprehension of the people. On the other hand, the mean CA of childhood talkative respondents is 59.68, and 69.84 is the mean CA of those respondents who were not talking and were outgoing in childhood. It means talkative children have less CA than non-talkative students.

**CA Score of the Respondents According to the Spending Time on Social Media and Classroom Sitting Position**

Figure 3. CA Score of the Respondents According to the Spending Time on Social Media and Classroom Sitting Position

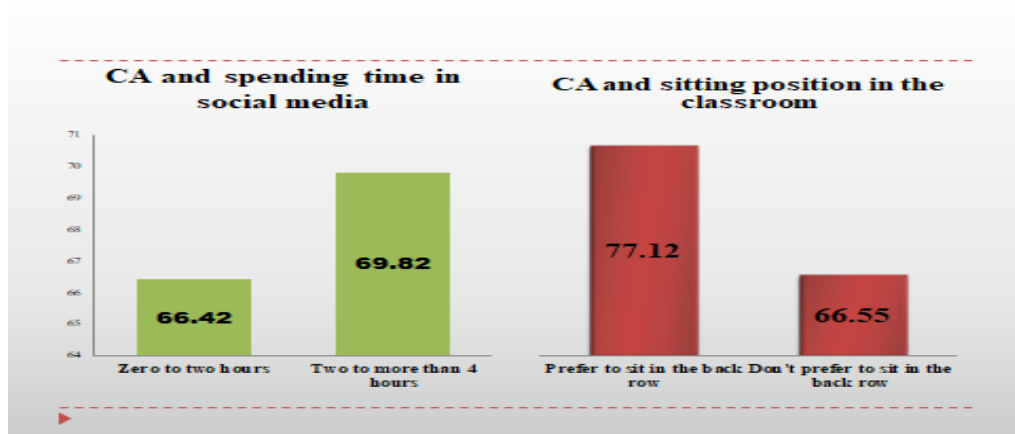
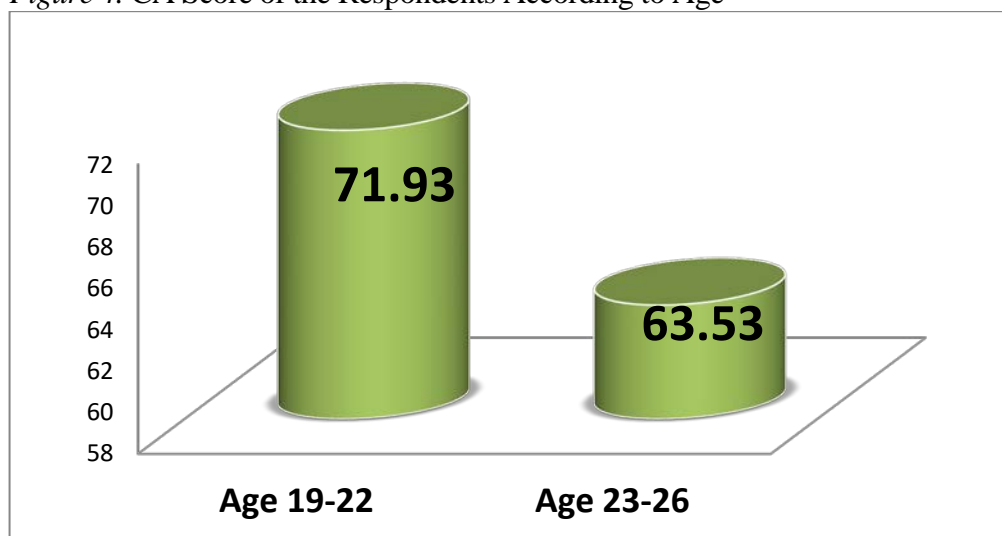


Figure 3 shows the amount of time spent on social media of the respondents and its relationship to communication apprehension. It shows that 23.67% of the respondents spend zero to two hours on social media per day and their mean CA score is 66.42. On the other hand, 76.33% of respondents spend two to more than four hours per day on the same platform but their mean CA score is 69.82%. Here

it is clear that less time spent on social media means less CA. Among 283 students 210(74.20%) don't prefer to sit in the back row or alongside of the room and their mean CA score 66.55. On the other side, 17 students prefer to sit in the back row or alongside the room and their mean CA score is 77.12 with a standard deviation of 18.891. The difference in CA scores between these two categories of students is 10.57. So, there is a significant difference between them. On the basis of this information, we can say that the students who prefer to sit in the back row or alongside the room have more CA than the students who don't prefer to sit in the back row.

### CA Score of the Respondents According to the Age

Figure 4. CA Score of the Respondents According to Age



Age is an important factor in measuring communication apprehension. The age range of 170 respondents is 19-22. There are also 113 students whose age is 23 to 26. Figure 4 expresses that the mean CA of the first 170 students is 71.93. On the other hand, the mean CA of second 113 students is 63.53. Here we can see the difference in CA between these two groups of people. On the basis of this table, we can say that senior students have less CA than junior students.

### Discussion

This study reveals that the mean communication apprehension among the communication students of Bangladesh is 68.12. It means CA is medium. Tahir et al. (2017) found similar results analyzing 23 papers. They reported general PRCA 24 score is from 55 to 83. The score of this study is also between these two numbers. This score is much lower than that of Nigerian Communication students. Tahir et al. (2017) said that the mean CA of Nigerian communication students is 81.85 while Maliha and Hossain (2020) found the mean CA of Bangladeshi communication students is 63.78. Alex (2015) said that the mean CA of Malaysian

accounts students is 74.94 which is more than the results of this study. Again Lias (2013) found the score of Asian accounts students is 73.9 Patil & Karekatti (2012) said the CA of Indian engineering students is 69.32. However, students from Western nations have a lower CA than those from non-Western nations. It reveals the general PRCA 24 score of United States students is 59.34. Finland Communication students' CA is 57.36.

In addition, the study found that 21% of communication students have severe CA. High apprehensive persons typically struggle to overcome their anxiety on their own. Oftentimes, when speaking, one's efficiency on both a personal and professional level can be impaired by apprehension. 65% of students exhibit moderate CA. The extent of preparation, circumstances, and communication style have the greatest impact on students with moderate apprehension. Typically, fear is not a deciding factor. Only 14% of communication students had low levels of CA. Students at this level may demonstrate either a high level of self-control or a lack thereof. It suggests that one is free to speak up at any time, regardless of the consequences. The mean score for interpersonal CA is 16.96, the mean score for group CA is 15.06, the mean score for meetings is 17.25, and the mean score for public speaking is 18.85. These results support Tahir et al. (2017) analysis, which provides a summary of 23 investigations. According to the statement, the range for interpersonal communication is between 11.6 and 18.2, the range for public speaking is between 17.77 and 20.1, the range for group discussions is between 12.67 and 21.6, and the range for meetings is between 12.42 and 21.44.

The mean CA of first, second, third, fourth, and masters' students are 73.15, 72.10, 68.35, 63.04 and 63.00 respectively. So, we can say that CA score can be varied on the basis of the academic year of the students. It supports the study of Maliha & Hossain (2020) which also claimed mean oral communication apprehension score of 1<sup>st</sup> year students is higher than that of 3<sup>rd</sup> year students. A communication student is bound to complete different types of courses during his/her graduation life e.g. concept of communication, interpersonal and group communication, public communication, speech communication, theories of communication, etc. Quinn & Goody (2019) argue that students who are worried about public speaking can benefit from simple courses. This study revealed little difference in the mean CA of men and women. The CA scores of men are 67.68 and those of women are 69.00. In this circumstance, female students are more uncomfortable than male students. Donovan (2004) found the mean CA score of females was 69.12, which was higher than that of the males. On the other hand, the mean score for males was 62.62 (Donovan, 2004). McCroskey (1982) also said men are believed to have lower CA levels than women. But Lin (2003) discovered the opposite to be true, contrary to the commonly held belief that males are less anxious than females. 70.74 is the average CA score of people who experience depression most of the time. Once again, the mean CA score of those who experience depression occasionally is 67.68. In contrast, the average CA score for those without depression is 64.47. A beneficial relationship exists between depression and communication anxiety. Consequently, more depressed people have higher CA. Those who like to be alone most of the time had higher levels of CA (mean 75.47) compared to those who do not. It means that loneliness affects a

person's ability to communicate. The mean CA score for respondents now engaged in co-curricular activities is 63.34, while the mean CA score for respondents who were actively engaged in co-curricular activities in the past is 68.20. The mean CA score for respondents who were not actively participating in co-curricular activities in the past is 74.88. It means that engagement in co-curricular activities contributes to a lower CA score and helps students overcome CA.

This study also discovered that 23.67% of the respondents spend zero to two hours on social media per day and their mean CA score is 66.42. On the other hand, 76.33% respondents spend two to more than four hours per day on the same platform, but their mean CA score is 69.82%. Here it is clear that less time spent on social media means less CA. Some studies support this statement. According to Awobamise (2022), persons who have high levels of communication apprehension are more likely than people who have lower levels to be addicted to social media. Whereas McCord & Levinson (2014) stated that people who have high levels of social anxiety prefer to use social media frequently. Some responders like to sit in the back row or along the side of the room, while others do not. The findings of this study revealed a CA difference between these two groups of students. The first category students' mean CA is 77.12, while second category students' is 66.55. Between these two groups of pupils, there is a 10.57 point difference in CA scores. Therefore, there is a big difference between them. Based on this data, we may conclude that students who like to sit in the back row or adjacent to the room have a higher CA than students who don't. The findings of this study are supported by Love (2013). According to him, kids who are shy or anxious around communication choose to sit towards the back or on the edges of the room, so they won't stand out. The people who raise their hands to answer questions in class and even speak up in small groups exhibit the lowest level of communication apprehension. The people who sit on the periphery of the classroom, trying to avoid eye contact with their teacher so they won't be asked to join in class discussion, exhibit the highest level of communication apprehension. Childhood talking patterns and communication anxiety are closely related. The mean CA of respondents who were talkative as children is 59.68. The mean CA of respondents who were talkative and outgoing as children, on the other hand, is 69.84. Children who talk a lot have lower CA than those who don't talk a lot.

This study indicates that there is a positive relationship between age and communication apprehension. This study found CA can be different in the variation of age. The mean CA of respondents aged between 19 to 22 is 71.93 and age between 23 to 26 is 63.53. Here aged respondents are found less communication apprehensive than less aged students. It supports the study of Watson (1989).

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to explore the communication apprehension of the communication students of Bangladesh. Finally, the study discovered the CA score and level of the communication apprehension of students of Bangladesh. The mean CA score is 68.12 and its level is medium or moderate. This score is

more than Western and European countries but less than some African and Asian countries. The mean CA score of interpersonal, group, meeting and public communication in this study is also at a moderate level. Among these four subcategories, public communication CA is high. There is a slight difference between male and female students. Female students are more apprehensive than male students.

Depression and loneliness have a negative impact on communication competence. The students who suffer from depression and loneliness most of the time experience more communication apprehension than others. Spending much time on social media is a new concern of communication apprehension. Because they are more communication apprehensive who spend more time on social media than those students who spend less time on social media. Generally, apprehensive students prefer to sit in the back row or alongside the room so that they can avoid face-to-face intimate communication with the teachers. The age of the respondent also has a close connection to CA. Senior students have less CA than junior students. The student who was talkative during childhood has less CA than other children. Some factors can contribute to reducing CA in students. Being involved actively with co-curricular activities is one of them. The more involvement with co-curricular activities can ensure less communication apprehension of the students. Offering more communication-related courses along with its practical session can contribute to overcoming all sorts of communication apprehension of the students. CA of master's or fourth year student is less than that of first year or second year students. Communication-related courses have contributed to this success. Finally the findings from this research will contribute to future studies and we hope conducting more research and adopting proper measures on the communication students a communication competent youth will be established.

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