

## The Relationship of the Self-Focused Attention, Body Image Concern and Generalized Self-Efficacy with Social Anxiety in Students

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**Abstract:** The aim of this study was to examine The Relationship of the Self-Focused Attention, Body Image Concern and Generalized Self-Efficacy with Social Anxiety in Students of Islamic Azad University of Ahvaz Branch. The research sample was 151 students (61 males, 90 females) which randomly selected for present study. The research sampling was cluster type. To collect data some scales like, social anxiety (FNE, SAD), Focus of attention (FAQ), Body Image concern (Littleton, Axsom & Pury) and generalized self-efficacy (GSE-10) were used. The research design was correlation type. The results by using Pearson correlation and multiple regressions showed that self-focused attention and body image concern had a positive correlation with social anxiety and generalized self-efficacy had a negative correlation with social anxiety. Also a multiple correlation between self-focused attention, body image concern and generalized self-efficacy with social anxiety was showed.

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### 1. Introduction

Social anxiety, known as a disturbing experience at others presence, is one of the factors disordering the individuals' growth and social perfection trends and preventing their talents and proves of existence. This phenomenon, which is relatively prevalent in youth, can have intercepting effects on the adolescence efficacy and dynamism and destruct their personal and social performance in various fields (Mehrabi zadeh, Najarian, and Baharloee, 1999). Kessler, McGonagle, Zhao, Nelson, Hughes, Eshleman & Wittchen (1994) found that the female adolescences with social anxiety are not probably able to finish the high school and both sexes are not able to enter the university and graduate (Mancini, 2001). In addition, this disorder is one of the most current problems of the female university students specially the female ones (17-19 percent of outbreak), and the recovery is not possible but with remedy (Muris & Oosten, 2002).

In the recent decades, several theoretical models have been provided to explain the infrastructural basis of the social anxiety from which mostly emphasized on the cognitive processes (e. g. Beck, Emery & Greenberg, 1985, Foa & kozak, 1986, and Clark & Wells, 1995). Evaluations based on Clark & Wells ( 1995 ) theory were concentrated on effect of self-focused attention on social anxiety showing that in

the socially anxious individuals facing frightening situations, the self-attention and access to negative thoughts and feelings are increased or interfered with their performance.

Findings showed that the fear of body malformation is related to the dissatisfaction of physical appearance or psychiatric disorders (social panic, anxiety, depression, and etc). Men and women with a fear of physical appearance often suffer from negative mood (anxiety and depression) and do not like to have social relationships with others (Bosak nejad and Ghafari, 2007). since individuals' perception of their body affects their personality and behavior, negative image of body causes psychological complications which inevitably affect the individual's interpersonal mentality, states, and relationships. One of these disorders is anxiety (Biby, 1998).

Researchers believe that self-efficacy plays an important role in social phobia. Hurrelmann & Losel (1990) showed that the social phobia is affected by negative psychological tendencies especially low self-efficacy and self-esteem.

**Many scientific studies concerning the this study's variables were carried out:**

Khayer, Ostovar, Taghavi, and Samani (2008) evaluated the psychic effect of the self focused attention on the relation between social anxiety and judgmental biases. Results showed that there is a

significant correlation between social anxiety and self-focused attention.

Voncken, Dijk, Jong, and Roelofs (2010) evaluated the performance of socially anxious individuals. Results showed that social anxiety has a relationship with the high levels of self-focused attention and negative thoughts.

Higa & Daleiden (2008) evaluated the anxiety and cognitive biases. Results showed that social anxiety is able to forecast the self-focused attention and biases to the threat.

Zue, Hudson, and Rapee (2007), Beidel, Turner, and Morris (1999), and Woody (1996) resulted that socially anxious individuals facing frightening situations, the self-attention and access to negative thoughts and feelings are increased or interfered with their performance.

Mansell (2007) evaluated the social anxiety, self-focused attention, and the effect of nonverbal behaviors of the negative, neutral, and positive auditors. Results showed that socially anxious individuals think that their weakness of social environment processing causes the negative evaluation of others, but they are not able to analyze their judgments. In addition, self-focused attention is increase in the socially anxious individuals.

Etu & Gray (2009) evaluated the relationship between rumination, body image concern, and anxiety. Results showed that the style of rumination especially in the field of body image can forecast the anxiety and body image concern. This study was based on Clark and Wilson's (2005) showing that rumination can provisionally cause and extend the body image anxiety.

Harth and Hermes (2007) evaluated the body disorders of shape and cosmetic surgery. Results showed that the problems accompanied by body deformity disorder are anxiety, depression, social phobia, and even psychotic disorders.

Taherifar, Fati, and Gharaee (2010) evaluated the model of university students' social panic forecast based on the behavioral cognitive components. Results showed that variable of social self-efficacy can forecast the social panic.

Masoudnia (2008) evaluated the social phobia and generalized self-efficacy. Findings showed the validity and ability of Bandura social-cognitive model as a theoretical model for explaining and predictive the social phobia. Self-efficacy structure, as the main structure in the Bandura social-cognitive theory, could completely explain the changes of the university students' social phobia.

Khayer et al (2008) resulted that there is significant correlation between the social anxiety and social self-efficacy.

Gholami, Kajbaf, Nehat doost, and moradi (2007) studied the effect of self-efficacy's group education on the rate of self-efficacy in the social situations of the female university students' social

panic. Results showed that the self-efficacy belief in the social situations increases the courage and reduce the rate of sadness during the social activities and, consequently, reduces their sensitivity toward the focus of others on their performance. Supportive atmosphere of the group educational courses, in which individuals with similar problems are participated, and techniques such as guest speech pattern and *theological convincing* help the respondents to correct their wrong thoughts about the focus of others' rate on their performance and their kind of evaluation in addition to reduce their sensitivity concerning this kind of being under observation, so their social panic would be reduced.

Rodebaugh (2006) evaluated the self-efficacy and social behavior. Results of his study showed that there is an inverse and significant relationship between self-efficacy and avoidance behaviors in the socially anxious individuals. Respondents with low self-efficacy have more avoidance of group talk than the other respondents.

Thus, according to the issues discussed above, this study was aimed to evaluate the events and factors causing the social anxiety so that the relationship between variable such as self-focused attention, body image concern, and generalized self-efficacy with social anxiety are cleared, this question is aimed to be answered that is there any significant relationship between social anxiety of the students of Azad university-Ahwaz branch and the self-focused attention, body image concern, and generalized self-efficacy.

## 2. Material and Method

### 2.1. Statistical population and sampling method

Statistical population of this study is the whole students educating in the Azad University -Ahwaz branch in 2010-11. Cluster multistage sampling method was used for sampling. Three faculties were selected from the faculties, one field of study was selected from the selected faculties, of which five classes were selected, and 12 students were finally selected from each class. 155 questionnaires were filled at last. After scouring the questionnaire, data was analyzed by SPSS. Volume sample, because the test ability was more than 80 percent, was enough.

### 2.2. Measurement tools

Following tools were used to measure the variables:

*A. Social anxiety FNE –SAD (Fear of negative evaluation and social avoidance and distress) questionnaire*

*B. FAQ (focus of attention questionnaire*

*C. Body image concern questionnaire (Littleton, Axsom, and Pury, 2005)*

**D.10-GSE (Generalized self-efficacy questionnaire)**

**A. Social anxiety FNE –SAD (Fear of negative evaluation and social avoidance and distress) questionnaire**

This questionnaire was prepared by Watson & Friend (1969). This test had two small-scales of social avoidance and fear of negative evaluation including 58 items, 28 ones related to the social avoidance and 30 ones related to the fear of negative evaluation. In the first small-scale (social avoidance), 15 and 13 items had positive and negative answers, respectively, which the higher score indicated a social avoidance and distress, but in the second one (fear of negative evaluation), 17 and 13 items had positive and negative answers, respectively, which the higher score indicated a more fear of negative evaluation. Total score is gained through adding the sum of incorrect answers for the rest items. Continuum of the answers was zero and one designated for each answer (Watson and Friend, 1969).

Reliability of the questionnaire has been calculated between 0.60 and 0.83 in the previous studies (Watson and Friend, 1969). In this study, the questionnaire reliability and its subscales were calculated by Alpha Cornbach's method, which was 0.83 for whole scale, 0.74 for the small-scale of social avoidance and distress and 0.81 for small-scale of fear of negative avoidance indicating an acceptable reliability for the questionnaire. Validity coefficient of the questionnaire have been calculated by Concurrent criterion validity (0.54 - 0.68) in the previous studies (Watson and Friend, 1969).

**B. Focus of attention questionnaire**

Focus of attention questionnaire (Woody, Chambless, and Glass, 1997) was created for measuring the socially anxious individuals' focus of attention in the social interactions. This questionnaire has 2 subscales (self-focused attention and external focus of attention) of 5 items. Respondents answered to the items of questionnaire based on the previous imagination of social interaction. Each item is scored on a 5-degree scale from completely incorrect (1) to completely correct (5). Scores of each subscale are calculated by the 5-items mean.

Woody et al (1997) reported that the Alpha Cornbach's Coefficient for the subscales of Self-focused attention and external attention questionnaires are 0.76 and 0.72, respectively. In this study, reliability coefficients of the focus of attention and its subscales were calculated by the Alpha Cornbach's method, which were 0.74, 0.68, and 0.51 for whole scale, subscale of self-focused attention, and subscale of external focus of attention, respectively, indicating an acceptable

reliability for the mentioned questionnaire. Results of this analysis showed two items, which are 55.85 percent of the focus of attention scores' variance. Consequently, item analysis showed that the first item with special value of 3.47 explains 31.81 percent of the variance including five items (3, 4, 7, 9, 10) and second item with special value of 2.12 explains 21.18 percent of the variance including 5 items (1, 2, 5, 6, 8). Extracted factors were named based on the study of Woody et al (1997) and their infrastructural structure (factor 1: self-focused attention and factor 2: out-focused attention).

**C. Body image concern questionnaire (Littleton, Axsom, and Pury, 2005)**

This questionnaire has 19 items evaluating the dissatisfaction and concern of individuals toward their appearance. Respondents were asked to score (on a scale from 1 to 5) each item showing the amount of their feelings or behavior. In this scale, 1 means that I have never had this feeling or I have not ever done such thing, and 5 means that I always have this feeling and do this thing. The questionnaire's total score was between 19 and 95, higher scores indicate the rate of dissatisfaction of body image. Littleton et al (2005) evaluated the factor structure of the questionnaire, too. Results showed two important and significant factors, including 11 items (1, 3, 5, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19), first one was dissatisfaction and embarrassment of the individuals related to their appearance in addition to evaluate and hide the perceived deficiencies. The second one, including 8 items (2, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13), was the rate of appearance concern interfered with the individual's social performance.

Littleton et al (2005) evaluated this questionnaire's reliability by the internal consistency and gained an Alpha Cornbach's coefficient of 0.93. Correlation coefficient of each question with the questionnaire's total score was from 0.32 and 0.73 (mean = 0.62). In addition, first and second factors' Alpha Cornbach's coefficients were 0.92 and 0.76, respectively, and the correlation coefficient of them was 0.69. In this study, reliability of the body image concern questionnaire and its subscales were calculated by Alpha Cornbach's method, which was 0.86 for the whole questionnaire. First little factor (dissatisfaction of appearance) was 0.84 and the second one (involve in the performance) was 0.71 indicating the acceptability of this questionnaire's reliability. In the study of Bosak nejad and Ghafari (2007), correlation coefficient between the scale of body image concern and fear of negative evaluation of the body appearance was 0.55 and the correlation coefficient between body image concern and fear of negative evaluation was 0.43, which was significant at  $p \leq 0.001$  level.

#### **D. Generalized self-efficacy (GSE-10) questionnaire**

This scale was created by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995). It has 20 items with two small-scales of generalized self-efficacy and social self-efficacy, which was reduced to a 10-item scale in 1981 in which the generalized self-efficacy is evaluated. Perceived Structure of the self-efficacy illustrates the optimistic view of the individuals toward themselves.

Schwarzer, Bäßler, Kwiatek, Schröder, and Zhang (1997) calculated the Alpha Cornbach's coefficients of the generalized self-efficacy scale for the university students of Germany (0.84), Coasta Rica and Spain (0.81), and China (0.91). Rajabi (2006) gained the Alpha Cornbach's coefficient for all students (0.82), Shahid Chamran's (0.84) and Azad university of Marvdasht's (0.80). In this study, reliability of the generalized self-efficacy questionnaire was calculated by Alpha Cornbach's method, which was 0.85 for the whole questionnaire indicating the accessibility of the questionnaire's reliability. Schwarzer, Schmitz, & Tang (2000) gained the validity coefficient of generalized self efficacy scale through optimistic attributional style, which was 0.49 in a group of students, 0.45 for challenge perception at stressful situations, and 0.58 for teachers with self-regularity, all coefficients were significant. In Rajabi's study (2006), Hamgera validity coefficients between the generalized self-efficacy scale and self-esteem scale was 0.30 ( $p \leq 0.0001$ ) for 318 individuals, 0.20 ( $p \leq 0.0001$ ) for 476 students of Shahid Chamran university, and 0.23 ( $p \leq 0.001$ ) for 208 students of Marvdasht Azad university.

### **3. Findings**

*Findings of this study are indicated in two sections*

#### **A: descriptive findings**

Descriptive findings of this study include statistical indexes such as mean, standard deviation, max, min, and the number of sample respondents illustrated in table 1 for all study's variables.

#### **B: Findings related to the study's hypotheses**

This study includes the following hypothesis, each one, with the results of analysis, is indicated in this section.

##### **Hypothesis 1**

There is a relationship between self-focused attention and social anxiety of the male and female university students.

As it is seen in table 2, there is a positive and significant relationship between self-focused attention and social anxiety of the male and female university students ( $p \leq 0.006$  and  $r=0.22$ ). So, this

hypothesis was confirmed for all students. There was not any positive and significant relationship between self-focused attention and social anxiety of the male students ( $p \leq 0.34$  and  $r=0.12$ ). So, the hypothesis was not confirmed for the male students. There was a positive and significant relationship between self-focused attention and social anxiety of the female students ( $p \leq 0.004$  and  $r=0.29$ ). So, the hypothesis was confirmed for the male students.

##### **Hypothesis 2**

There is a relationship between body image concern and social anxiety of the male and female university students.

As it is seen in table 2, there is a positive and significant relationship between body image concern and social anxiety of the male and female university students ( $p \leq 0.0001$  and  $r=0.44$ ). So, this hypothesis was confirmed for all students. There was positive and significant relationship between body image concern and social anxiety of the male students ( $p \leq 0.0001$  and  $r=0.44$ ). So, the hypothesis was confirmed for the male students. There was a positive and significant relationship between body image concern and social anxiety of the female students ( $p \leq 0.0001$  and  $r=0.44$ ). So, the hypothesis was confirmed for the male students.

##### **Hypothesis 3**

There is a relationship between generalized self-efficacy and social anxiety of the male and female university students.

As it is seen in table 2, there is a negative and significant relationship between generalized self-efficacy and social anxiety of the male and female university students ( $p \leq 0.001$  and  $r=-0.27$ ). So, this hypothesis was confirmed for all students. There was not any negative and significant relationship between generalized self-efficacy and social anxiety of the male students ( $p \leq 0.15$  and  $r=-0.18$ ). So, the hypothesis was not confirmed for the male students. There was a negative and significant relationship between generalized self-efficacy and social anxiety of the female students ( $p \leq 0.002$  and  $r=-0.31$ ). So, the hypothesis was confirmed for the male students.

##### **Hypothesis 4**

There is a relationship between social anxiety of the male and female university students and self-focused attention, body image concern, and generalized self-efficacy.

As it is seen in table 3, according to the results of regression with the enter method, multiple correlation coefficients for linear integration of the self-focused attention, body

image concern, and generalized self-efficacy variables with the social anxiety in all students were  $MR = 0.49$  and  $RS = 0.23$ , which were significant at a  $p \leq 0.0001$  level. So, this hypothesis was confirmed for all students. Based on the amount of RS coefficient of determination, 23 percent of the social anxiety's variance was explained by the predictive variables. Results for the male students were  $MR = 0.47$  and  $RS = 0.18$ , which were significant at a  $p \leq 0.002$ . So, this hypothesis was confirmed for the male students. Based on the amount of RS coefficient of determination, 18 percent of the social anxiety's variance was explained by the predictive variables. Results for the female students were  $MR = 0.51$  and  $RS = 0.23$ , which were significant at a  $p \leq 0.0001$ . So, this hypothesis was confirmed for the female students. Based on the amount of RS coefficient of determination, 23 percent of the social anxiety's variance was explained by the predictive variables.

#### 4. Conclusion and discussion

##### 4.1. Hypothesis 1

results of this study for all students and the female ones are in accordance with the results of Khaier et al (2008), Voncken, Dijk, Jong, and Roelofs (2010), Higa & Daleiden (2008), Zue, Hudson, and Rapee (2007), Beidel, Turner, and Morris (1999), Woody (1996), Mansell (2002), Bogels & Lamers (2002), Hofmann (2000), Mellings and Alden (2000), Rapee & Heimberg (1997), Clark and Wells (1995), Winton, Clark and Edelman (1995), and Rapee & Lim (1992). Explaining the findings of this hypothesis, it can be concluded that:

The second process activated after the social threat understanding is the self-focused attention. Based on the model of Clark and Wells (1995), when socially anxious individuals feel that they are negatively evaluated by others, they change their attention to revise and observe themselves, so their accessibility to the negative feelings and thoughts is increased and involved with their performance.

Individuals with social anxiety don't use others' reaction to get the clues of how they are evaluated, but they wait for the negative sentimentous evaluation about themselves not the others' judgments, so they automatically suppose that this information is related to that how others evaluate them. Consequently, instead of observing others' reactions, individuals with social anxiety focus their attention on the inner side and only on themselves (Clark and Wells, 1995).

Clark and Wells (1995) emphasized on the biases in attention, change of events, and its key importance, and believed that this kind of biases is created through the wrong activated assumptions about the person's self and social world followed by the negative evaluation of the social situations,

so the anxiety program is activated and this disorder's cognitive, behavioral, and physical signs are continued.

***In addition, there is not any positive and significant relationship between self-focused attention and social anxiety of the male students. There was not any related study, too. Explaining this:***

A successful social interaction needs a suitable balance of self-focused attention and outside-focused attention, because of the attention biases of individuals with social panic, this balance become disordered (Wells & Mathews, 1994). It seems that the individuals with social panic increase their self-focused attention and reduce their outer one in the social situations (Mellings & Alden, 2000).

There is a probability in explaining the findings of this study which by considering the limitations of this study, use of experimental methods to measure the attention biases was not possible. Two known cognitive-tentative approaches, Dot-probe paradigm and Stoop task, in most evaluations, were used to measure the attentional processes. Thus, attention biases measurement by a questionnaire is not an ideal method. It can be said that the findings are affected by measurement method.

##### 4.2. Hypothesis 2

results of the second hypothesis (for all respondents) are in accordance with Harth and Hermes (2007), Freda and Gamez (2004), Biby (1998), Thompson (1990), Keeton, Cassh, and Brown (1990), Annis, Cash, and Hrabosky (2004), Cash and Hicks (1990), and Nye and Cash (2006).

Studies showed that individuals more sensitive in their social interactions have more fear of physical appearance and others' evaluation related to this issue. In fact, body image concern, as a cognitive process, can cause social anxiety. Individuals with social anxiety often perceive negative images from themselves during the social situations affecting their social performance.

Based on the self-supply model (a perception which individuals prefer to create in others based on their beliefs toward themselves), individual's goal is to have a positive effect on others. If individuals conclude this based on their self-confidence, there would not be any efficient effect on others, probably; they will experience a fear of negative evaluation in the social and performance situations.

Individuals with social anxiety think that the other people are naturally critics and negatively evaluating they so, when facing the others, create a mental representation from their own appearance and behavior as they think they are watched by others. This mental representation is created based on several inputs such as the previous experiences, real-self image, and feedbacks of others, which is

usually negative and they focus their simultaneous attention on both this mental representation of themselves and any perceived threat from the environment. Then, they enter the comparison process and start processing the others' expected performance standard and the mental representation of their own appearance and behavior, and have a negative judgment about the probability of being negatively evaluated by others. These negative judgments cause the physical, cognitive, and behavioral signs of anxiety, which affect the individual's mental representation through an interpretation of internal anxiety signs and external indices of negative evaluation, again, the anxiety's incomplete cycle would be continued (Rapee and Heimberg, 199).

So, in ones having no positive body image of themselves or low self-esteem, some cognitive, emotional, perceiving, and behavioral inconsistencies related to body's weight or form are created which cause the signs of anxiety.

#### 4.3. Hypothesis 3

results of third hypothesis in all and female students are in accordance with Taheri Far et al (2010), Masoudnia (2008), Khaier et al (2008), Gholami et al (2007), Gaudiano and Herbert (2003), Muris (2002), Muris et al (2001), Pajares (1997), Clark and Wells (1995), Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1992), Hurrelmann and Losel (1990), Maddux et al (1988), Pearl (1993), and Moe and Zeiss (1982).

Explaining the findings of hypothesis 3:

According to Bandura, perceived inefficiency has an important role in the anxiety, stress, mental irritation, and other emotional states. Individuals become anxious when find themselves unable to counter the threatening stimulus (Muris, 2002). Individuals with weak self-efficacy find the tasks and work difficult and this increases their anxiety. In contrast, powerful beliefs of self-efficacy cause relaxation and closeness to carry out the difficult tasks (Pajares & Schunk, 2002).

These results are logical because Bandura believed that self-efficacy is a cognitive mediator affecting the cognition, thoughts, and sensations of the individuals. When the students face negative or stressful situations, sense of self-efficacy help them to control and organize those events and situation and secure themselves from many psychological problems. In the other hand, sense of low self-efficacy prevents an effective counter to the stress situations and increases the illness signs.

Individuals with high social anxiety often feel that they haven't the specific skills and the necessary abilities for inter personal behavior, and have a low expectation of success in the social situations; this causes more and contentious anxiety in them. In fact, when individuals have correct judgments from their abilities, they can resolve the

problems by a correct analysis so that those problems won't cause any disorders or trauma

***Findings of this study related to the male students are not in accordance with those of the mentioned studies (there was not any negative relationship between the generalized self-efficacy and social anxiety of the male students). Explaining that:***

Studies showed that the self-efficacy is different in the two sexes. It seemed that self-efficacy is different based on the age and sex. Males are averagely more self-efficient than females; the sexual differences in this field reach its climax in the age of 20 and start to reduce in the next years. Results' lack of accordance is mostly related to the cultural, family, incorrect perception of abilities, perception of roles, and sexual model-finding factors. Factors such as incorrect perception of abilities, skills, differences in the methods and educational models, low or great expectations, society's attitude, and social organizations affect the sexual differences (Najafi and Foadchang, 2007).

#### 4.4. Hypothesis 4

*Explaining the fourth hypothesis:*

Anxiety is an emotional state and is created after evaluating the information related to the threatening event or personal ability perception to counter it (Gaudiano and Herbert, 2003). If an event is perceived beyond the individual's ability of counter, accidental disability of counter can be effectively followed by anxiety (Bandura, 1997).

Individuals with social anxiety, in the threatening situations, perceive the environmental threats out of their control, so they, intemperately, focus their attention toward themselves. As thinking that they are negatively judged by others, they focus their attention to check and supervise themselves, so the accessibility to negative thoughts is increased in them, which increase the negative biases toward the social facts (Clark and Wells, 1995).

In addition, body image disorder is occurred when an individual has a distortion in perception, behavior, cognition, and emotion related to the body's weight and form (Rayegan et al, 2006).

Body image is a basic element of the personality and each individual's self-concept affecting the psychological life and attitudes. this image can be positive or negative, affect the psychological well-being of the individual, and become a resource for positive and negative emotions and, through this, affect the individual's social relations. If the individual's body image is too inconsistence, the social relations and interpersonal communications would be highly affected. Intensive concern of the others' negative evaluation causes body image dissatisfaction for the person. If individuals experience a negative

evaluation or being ridiculed by the others, a negative body image is created in them which act as a schema. A special motivating situation, such as situations in which the individual has to show his/her body to the others, activates this schema. This issue, by itself, causes intensive care, negative interpretation of others' behavior, avoidance behavior, effort for covering and hiding the body, seeking- to -ensure, and compensatory actions. These behaviors provide the ground for the creation of negative cognitive and emotional experiences about the body form and its related concern. This issue cause the concern to continue and get worst providing the field for psychological disorder formation and, finally, would have terrible effects on the different aspects of the individual's life.

In the other hand, cognitive factors such as beliefs of inefficiency and illogical thoughts have an important role in the cause and continuity of the anxiety disorders. Perceived self-efficacy is to counter the perceived social threat. Individuals' beliefs of their ability to counter related to that how much anxiety they can experience at the threatening situations and beliefs of self-efficacy has a key role in motivating the anxiety to control the stressful situation. Individuals who think that they can control the environmental

events don't remember the anxious though method in their mind and don't be anxious by them, but they believe that they can't control the potential environmental threats and experience a high level of anxiety at the threatening situations (Clark and Wells, 1995).

In addition, results of studies showed that the self-focused attention activates the individual's self-concept and increases it in different cognitive processes. Consequently, in these situations, accessibility and processing the self-related information is facilitated and the rate of thoughts and perception negativity would be increased.

Thus, it can be concluded that all mentioned variables are related to the cognitive factors and it is logical to have reciprocal effects on each other. Totally, results of this study showed that self-focused attention, body image concern, and self-efficacy have an important relationship with the cognitive activities of the socially anxious individuals. So, looking for methods, in accordance with our culture, able to focus the attention of socially anxious individuals to the outside of themselves and reduce their negative self-concept activity cause the modification of body image and increase of self-efficacy beliefs.

**Table1. Mean standard deviation, min, and max of the students' scores**

| number | max | min | Standard deviation | mean  | variable                  | respondents     |
|--------|-----|-----|--------------------|-------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 151    | 44  | 4   | 8.12               | 22.17 | Social anxiety            | All students    |
| 151    | 24  | 5   | 3.79               | 16.35 | Self-focused attention    |                 |
| 151    | 84  | 19  | 13.10              | 39.74 | Body image concern        |                 |
| 151    | 40  | 13  | 5.45               | 30.03 | Generalized self-efficacy |                 |
| 61     | 40  | 7   | 7.77               | 21.45 | Social anxiety            | Male students   |
| 61     | 24  | 7   | 3.84               | 16.70 | Self-focused attention    |                 |
| 61     | 68  | 19  | 13.09              | 39.81 | Body image concern        |                 |
| 61     | 40  | 17  | 5.16               | 30.44 | Generalized self-efficacy |                 |
| 90     | 44  | 4   | 8.36               | 22.65 | Social anxiety            | Female students |
| 90     | 23  | 5   | 3.76               | 16.12 | Self-focused attention    |                 |
| 90     | 84  | 19  | 13.19              | 39.70 | Body image concern        |                 |
| 90     | 40  | 13  | 5.64               | 29.75 | Generalized self-efficacy |                 |

**Table2. Simple correlation coefficients between the social anxiety of the students and self-focused attention, body image concern, and generalized self -efficacy**

| Number of samples (n) | Level of significance (p) | Correlation coefficient (r) | respondents     | criterion variable | Predictive variables      |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 151                   | 0.006                     | 0.22                        | All students    | social anxiety     | self-focused attention    |
| 60                    | 0.34                      | 0.12                        | Male students   |                    |                           |
| 90                    | 0.004                     | 0.29                        | Female students |                    |                           |
| 151                   | 0.0001                    | 0.44                        | All students    | social anxiety     | Body image concern        |
| 60                    | 0.0001                    | 0.44                        | Male students   |                    |                           |
| 90                    | 0.0001                    | 0.44                        | Female students |                    |                           |
| 151                   | 0.001                     | -0.27                       | All students    | social anxiety     | Generalized self-efficacy |
| 60                    | 0.15                      | -0.18                       | Male students   |                    |                           |
| 90                    | 0.002                     | -0.31                       | Female students |                    |                           |

**Table3. Multiple correlations with simultaneous method for analyzing the relationship of social anxiety of the students and self-focused attention, body image concern, and generalized self-efficacy**

| Level of significance (P) | amount (T) | Regression coefficients (B) | Ratio F probability  | Consistent coefficient of determination (RS) | Multiple correlation (MR) | Predictive variables      | Criterion variable | respondents     |
|---------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 0.049                     | 1.98       | 0.14                        |                      |  |                           | self-focused attention    | Social anxiety     | All students    |
| 0.0001                    | 4.77       | 0.36                        | F=15.93<br>P≤ 0.0001 | 0.23   | 0.49                      | body image concern        |                    |                 |
| 0.010                     | -2.61      | -0.19                       |                      |  |                           | Generalized self-efficacy |                    |                 |
| 0.24                      | 1.18       | 0.14                        |                      |  |                           | self-focused attention    | Social anxiety     | Male students   |
| 0.001                     | 3.38       | 0.40                        | F=5.46<br>P≤ 0.002   | 0.18   | 0.47                      | body image concern        |                    |                 |
| 0.32                      | -1.001     | -0.12                       |                      |  |                           | Generalized self-efficacy |                    |                 |
| 0.14                      | 1.48       | 0.14                        |                      |  |                           | self-focused attention    | Social anxiety     | Female students |
| 0.001                     | 3.33       | 0.33                        | F=10.26<br>P≤ 0.0001 | 0.23   | 0.51                      | body image concern        |                    |                 |
| 0.02                      | -2.33      | -0.22                       |                      |  |                           | Generalized self-efficacy |                    |                 |

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