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Fear of negative evaluation, loneliness, and social interaction anxiety among Chinese technical-vocational senior high school students

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Abstract

This research assessed levels of fear of negative evaluation, loneliness, and social interaction anxiety among Technical-Vocational Senior High School (TVSHS) students in central China and examined demographic differences and interrelationships among these factors to inform the development of a psychological intervention program. Employing a descriptive-correlational research design, the study gathered data from TVSHS students selected through stratified random sampling, using standardized instruments: the Brief Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale (BFNE-2), the UCLA Loneliness Scale Version 3 (ULS-3), and the Social Interaction Anxiety Scale (SIAS). Descriptive statistics, the Mann-Whitney U test, the Kruskal-Wallis H test, and Spearman's rho correlation analysis were used to analyze the data. Results revealed that the participants scored high in fear of negative evaluation, loneliness, and social interaction anxiety. Fear of negative evaluation did not differ significantly by sex, grade level, academic major, residential location, or only-child status. However, selected dimensions of loneliness and social interaction anxiety varied significantly according to sex, academic major, and residential location. Correlation analysis indicated a statistically significant negative relationship between fear of negative evaluation and loneliness, as well as a significant negative relationship between loneliness and social interaction anxiety, while no significant relationship was found between fear of negative evaluation and social interaction anxiety. These findings suggest that TVSHS students experience elevated levels of psychosocial difficulties that are shaped by certain demographic characteristics and are interrelated in complex ways. Based on the findings, a targeted psychological intervention program was designed to increase students' self-confidence, emotional control, social skills, and adaptive coping mechanisms, with the aim of lowering their fear of negative evaluation, loneliness, and social anxiety. It is recommended that school authorities and guidance personnel implement this intervention program and provide continuous monitoring and support to promote the psychological well-being of TVSHS students.

Keywords: fear of negative evaluation, loneliness, social interaction anxiety, psychological intervention program, Project CONFIDE

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1. Introduction

This study uses Chinese Technical-Vocational Senior High School (TVSHS) students as research participants and systematically explores the relational structure and mechanism of action among three core psychological variables: fear of negative evaluation, loneliness, and Social Interaction Anxiety, which is the central motivation for this research. As a distinctive adolescent group, TVSHS students face challenges such as academic pathway differences, social stereotypes, and ambiguous vocational identity, with interpersonal adaptation-related emotional issues becoming a key focus of campus mental health education. Existing studies have confirmed that the three variables are closely correlated and adversely affect adolescent development, yet integrated research targeting this group remains scarce, thereby hindering the development of targeted interventions and necessitating further exploration.

In the context of China's vocational education development, the particularity and urgency of TVSHS students' mental health problems are prominent, with the three variables showing distinct manifestations in this group. Recent domestic empirical data indicate that the detection rate of Social Interaction Anxiety among TVSHS students is significantly higher than that among general high school students; nearly 40% experience varying degrees of loneliness; and fear of negative evaluation is prevalent (Jiang, 2024). At a critical stage in the development of self-awareness, TVSHS students are under dual pressure to learn skills and pursue internships. Exploring the mechanism of action among the three variables aligns with the practical needs of mental health education in China's vocational education. As such, for Tilos and Bagood (2026), technical–vocational senior high school students often experience fear of negative evaluation as a salient form of social anxiety, manifesting as heightened worry about being judged incompetent or inferior by teachers, peers, and future employers during performance-based tasks and skills demonstrations.

Fear of negative evaluation refers to individuals' excessive worry about potential negative evaluations, such as denial or criticism from others. As a typical social cognitive bias, it centers on the anticipatory fear of potential negative evaluations (Zhou, 2022) and is also the core upstream cognitive variable of Social Interaction Anxiety. Recent studies have revealed that fear of negative evaluation among TVSHS students has distinct features of campus culture, including fear of making mistakes when demonstrating their skills and of rejection by teachers and students, which has been shown to be negatively related to vocational identity (Qiao, 2025). This persistent concern about being judged can lead students to withdraw from collaborative workshops, group projects, and peer feedback, thereby reducing opportunities for meaningful social connection and fostering feelings of emotional and social loneliness within the school environment.

Loneliness is an adverse emotional response characterized by an individual's sense of isolation and unmet social expectations, and its essence lies in subjectivity rather than objective solitude (Zhou, 2022). As such, loneliness is categorized into emotional and social forms and commonly occurs in combination among adolescents. Recent studies have revealed that the proportion of lonely individuals among TVSHS students is 38.6%, much higher than that among ordinary middle school students, and that this proportion is negatively correlated with campus adaptation. Class isolation and the absence of close friends are the principal factors, and it is easy for loneliness to trigger a vicious cycle of loneliness-emotion imbalance-loneliness (Peng, 2024). Over time, this self-reinforcing cycle can heighten social interaction anxiety, as students increasingly anticipate rejection and judgment in classroom and workshop settings, leading them to avoid peer engagement and further entrenching both their loneliness and anxiety.

Social Interaction Anxiety involves anxiety that arises from concerns over the judgmental reactions of other

people towards oneself, with physiological and behavioral responses resulting from the same. The condition of social interaction anxiety is defined as the continuous construct between normal anxiety and anxiety disorders (Zhang, 2022) and comprises elements such as negative evaluation and anxiety in social interactions. In recent research, Social Interaction Anxiety among TVSHS students primarily centers on vocation-related scenarios, such as skill demonstrations and cooperation with others. This is one of the existing problems, and students' fear of speaking in front of an audience leads them to avoid attending their classes. The problem demonstrates a negative relationship with social support, which includes peers' and student-teacher social interactions (Jiang, 2024).

Existing studies conducted in China have consistently documented that fear of negative evaluation, loneliness, and social interaction anxiety are interrelated psychosocial challenges among adolescents and young adults in secondary and tertiary education, with emerging evidence suggesting similar dynamics may extend to technical–vocational senior high school (TVSHS) populations. As noted by Xu and He (2024) in their report, based on results from an empirical study involving more than 1,200 middle-school students, fear of negative evaluation positively affected both loneliness and Social Interaction Anxiety, which mediated the effects of the former on the latter. The three variables together constitute the core circular system of adolescent interpersonal maladaptation. However, the study focused on general middle school students, with no specific verification for TVSHS students or in-depth exploration of fear of negative evaluation as the core variable, failing to reflect the characteristics of variable relations in this group and leaving a research gap for this study.

This study was conducted at a key TVSHS (coded as School Z) in City H, central China, which offers engineering, liberal arts, and comprehensive majors, has a balanced allocation of teachers and resources, and has a total of 6,000 enrolled students. Stratified random sampling was used to select full-time students across different grades and majors, with 500 questionnaires planned for distribution. The research participants were eligible students aged 15-19, without severe mental illnesses or cognitive impairments, capable of completing questionnaires independently, and all participated voluntarily with signed informed consent forms. Such a study would be important from both theoretical and practical perspectives across several spheres. In the first place, for students at TVSHS, it will help them understand the psychological nature of interpersonal maladjustment and learn how to handle these emotions. For educators and school administrators, the results provide a scientific basis for constructing a mental health education system centered on fear of negative evaluation and building an inclusive campus culture. For the researcher, applying psychological knowledge in vocational education can enhance the ability to conduct empirical research and analyze data. For the applied psychology major, it enriches research in vocational education psychology and provides a new perspective on interdisciplinary research and talent training.

The core achievement of this study is the Intervention Plan for Interpersonal Emotional Issues and Cognitive Roots of TVSHS Students, developed from empirical findings. With the core goals of reducing fear of negative evaluation, alleviating Social Interaction Anxiety, and improving loneliness, and combined with the psychological characteristics of TVSHS students and campus scenarios, the plan constructs a multi-level integrated intervention system of "cognitive intervention-behavioral training-environmental support", including practical contents such as cognitive restructuring, social skills training, and group psychological counseling, which is suitable for campus application. The implementation of this plan provides practical tools for targeted mental health interventions in TVSHSs, helps students improve their interpersonal adaptability, and lays a solid psychological foundation for their skill learning and vocational development.

Objectives of the study - This study aimed to explore the status and demographic differences of fear of negative evaluation, loneliness, and social interaction anxiety in TVSHS students as a basis for the development of a psychological intervention program. Specifically, it described the profile of the respondents in terms of their sex, grade level, type of major enrolled, residential location, and only-child status; determined the respondents' levels of fear of negative evaluation, loneliness, and social interaction anxiety; tested the group differences of the three variables based on the demographic profile; examined the correlations among the three variables; and proposed a psychological intervention program centered on alleviating fear of negative evaluation, loneliness, and social interaction anxiety.

2. Methods

The study used a descriptive-correlational design to assess fear of negative evaluation, loneliness, and social interaction anxiety among technical and vocational senior high school (TVSHS) students. It examined how these variables were related and tested whether social interaction anxiety statistically mediated the relationship between fear of negative evaluation and loneliness. Participants were drawn from 6,000 full-time students aged 15–19 at one TVSHS in central China. The researchers targeted 500 respondents, exceeding the calculated minimum of 375 to support subgroup comparisons. Sampling was stratified by grade and major, with a target 1:1 sex ratio. The study used Chinese adaptations of the Brief Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale (BFNE-2), the UCLA Loneliness Scale Version 3 (ULS-3), and the Social Interaction Anxiety Scale (SIAS).

The 24-week procedure covered research preparation, a preliminary survey with 50 students, formal questionnaire administration, and data cleaning and analysis. Descriptive statistics summarized the three measures, while Mann–Whitney U and Kruskal–Wallis tests examined demographic differences. Spearman's rho assessed the strength and direction of associations, and regression and mediation analyses were conducted using SPSS and Hayes' PROCESS macro. The researchers sought ethics approval from the university where they were enrolled in the Philippines and complied with China's personal information protection requirements. Students aged 18–19 provided their own informed consent, while minors provided assent with permission from a parent or legal guardian. Participation was voluntary and anonymous; students could stop at any time without penalty, and access to the research data was restricted to the research team.

3. Results and discussion

Table 1
Profile Distribution of the Respondents

Profile	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Sex		
Male	256	51.2
Female	244	48.8
Grade Level		
Grade 11	205	41.0
Grade 12	295	59.0
Type of Major Enrolled		
Engineering	105	21.0
Liberal Arts and Service	205	41.0
Comprehensive Major	190	38.0
Residence		
Urban	70	14.0
Suburban	165	33.0
Rural	265	53.0
If Only Child		
Yes	260	52.0
No	240	48.0

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the 500 technical-vocational senior high school (TVSHS) students. The sample was nearly balanced by sex, with 256 males (51.2%) and 244 females (48.8%). Grade 12 students accounted for 295 respondents (59.0%), while Grade 11 students accounted for 205 (41.0%). Liberal Arts and Service was the largest major group, with 205 students (41.0%), followed by the Comprehensive Major with 190 (38.0%) and Engineering with 105 (21.0%). More than half of the respondents lived in rural areas (265, 53.0%), while 165 (33.0%) lived in suburban areas and 70 (14.0%) lived in urban areas. Only children accounted for 260 respondents (52.0%), while 240 (48.0%) had siblings. The distribution was nearly even, with a slightly higher proportion of only children, a pattern also reported by Lin et al. (2021) among TVSHS students in China. These figures describe the students surveyed at the participating school and provide context for interpreting the findings on fear of negative evaluation, loneliness, and social interaction anxiety.

Table 2
Respondents' Level of Fear of Negative Evaluation

Variable	Weighted Mean	Std. Dev	Interpretation
General Worry about Judgment	11..3700	1.77748	
Fear of Impressions & Mistakes	11.6340	1.58527	
Fear of Approval, Laughter, Criticism & Rejection	18.8180	2.26077	
Fear of Negative Evaluation	45.6020	3.24046	High fear of negative evaluation

Legend: 12–23: Low fear of negative evaluation, 24–35: Moderate fear of negative evaluation, 36–47: High fear of negative evaluation, 48–60: Severe fear of negative evaluation

Table 2 shows that TVSHS students reported a high level of fear of negative evaluation, as indicated by the study's scoring criteria (M = 45.60, SD = 3.24). This suggests that students often worry about how others might judge them. In school, this concern may arise when students answer questions, present ideas, or receive feedback from peers and teachers. Concerns about approval, ridicule, criticism, and rejection had the highest reported raw subscale mean (M = 18.82, SD = 2.26). Fear of making mistakes and leaving a negative impression had a raw mean of 11.63 (SD = 1.59). If the dimensions contain different numbers of items, per-item means should be compared before identifying the most pronounced concern. He (2023) noted that experiences of mockery, social comparison, and rejection may heighten adolescents' sensitivity to negative evaluation at school. Concern about making mistakes or attracting criticism may make students hesitant to ask questions, share ideas, or take on visible roles in group activities. Teachers can make participation less intimidating by giving specific, constructive feedback, addressing ridicule, and treating mistakes as opportunities to learn.

Table 3
Respondents' Level of Loneliness

Variable	Weighted Mean	Std. Dev.	Interpretation
Isolation & Lack of Companionship	33.3320	3.05162	
Lack of Intimacy & Understanding	14.3480	1.88945	
Difficulty Making New Friends	17.3600	2.83451	
Loneliness	65.0400	4.78081	High loneliness

Legend: 20–39: Low loneliness, 40–59: Moderate loneliness, 60–79: High loneliness, 80–100: Severe loneliness

Table 3 shows that TVSHS students reported a high level of loneliness, as indicated by the study's UCLA Loneliness Scale scoring criteria (M = 65.04, SD = 4.78). This suggests that students frequently perceived gaps in their social relationships. Guo (2022) identified challenges in adjusting to a vocational-school identity, experiences of social discrimination, and difficulties with interpersonal communication as possible contributors to feelings of alienation among TVSHS students. Isolation and lack of companionship had the highest raw subscale mean (M = 33.33, SD = 3.05), followed by difficulty making new friends (M = 17.36, SD = 2.83) and lack of intimacy and understanding (M = 14.35, SD = 1.89). If the dimensions contain different numbers of items, their per-item means should be compared before determining which concern students reported most frequently. Together, the dimensions capture different aspects of loneliness, from finding companionship and forming new friendships to feeling understood in existing relationships. The findings suggest that students can interact regularly at school and still feel socially disconnected. Chen (2022) identified peer acceptance, classroom integration, and social support as protective factors against adolescent loneliness. Structured opportunities for peer interaction and support may help TVSHS students form friendships and develop relationships in which they feel understood.

Table 4
Respondents' Level of Social Interaction Anxiety

Variable	Weighted Mean	Std. Dev.	Interpretation
Avoidance & Initiation	18.3460	2.52409	
Fear of Judgment & Physical Symptoms	33.2400	3.04120	
Public Speaking & Authority	22.2940	2.37125	
Social Interaction Anxiety	73.8800	4.78282	High

Legend: 20–39: Low social interaction anxiety, 40–59: Moderate social interaction anxiety, 60–79: High social interaction anxiety, 80–100: Severe social interaction anxiety

Table 4 shows that TVSHS students reported a high level of social interaction anxiety based on the study's scoring criteria (M = 73.88, SD = 4.78). The result suggests that students experienced considerable anxiety in

interpersonal and evaluative situations. Jiang (2022) explained that heightened self-awareness, the growing importance of peer relationships, and greater sensitivity to social evaluation may make adolescents particularly susceptible to this form of anxiety. Fear of judgment and physical symptoms had the highest raw subscale mean (M = 33.24, SD = 3.04), followed by public speaking and authority (M = 22.29, SD = 2.37) and avoidance and initiation (M = 18.35, SD = 2.52). These dimensions capture distinct experiences, including nervousness when being judged, anxiety about speaking before others or addressing teachers, and hesitation to initiate conversations. If the dimensions contain different numbers of items, per-item means should be compared before concluding which concern was most pronounced. The findings point to situations in which students may hesitate to participate, such as group discussions, oral presentations, and interactions with teachers. Schools may support participation by offering low-pressure speaking opportunities, giving constructive feedback, and treating mistakes as a normal part of learning.

Table 5

Comparison on Fear of Negative Evaluation when grouped according to Profile

Profile Variables	*H/U*	p-Value	Interpretation
Sex			
General Worry About Judgement	30092.500	0.473	Not Significant
Fear of Impression & Mistakes	29303.500	0.224	Not Significant
Fear of Approval, Laughter, Criticism & Rejection	28405.500	0.077	Not Significant
Fear of Negative Evaluation	28367.500	0.075	Not Significant
Grade Level			
General Worry About Judgement	29125.000	0.477	Not Significant
Fear of Impression & Mistakes	29412.500	0.597	Not Significant
Fear of Approval, Laughter, Criticism & Rejection	27544.500	0.087	Not Significant
Fear of Negative Evaluation	27893.500	0.138	Not Significant
Type of Major Enrolled			
General Worry About Judgement	1.100	0.577	Not Significant
Fear of Impression & Mistakes	1.097	0.578	Not Significant
Fear of Approval, Laughter, Criticism & Rejection	4.056	0.132	Not Significant
Fear of Negative Evaluation	3.124	0.210	Not Significant
Residential Location			
General Worry About Judgement	1.853	0.396	Not Significant
Fear of Impression & Mistakes	0.689	0.709	Not Significant
Fear of Approval, Laughter, Criticism & Rejection	1.014	0.602	Not Significant
Fear of Negative Evaluation	0.201	0.905	Not Significant
Only Child			
General Worry About Judgement	29326.500	0.238	Not Significant
Fear of Impression & Mistakes	30745.500	0.775	Not Significant
Fear of Approval, Laughter, Criticism & Rejection	29500.000	0.288	Not Significant
Fear of Negative Evaluation	30715.500	0.763	Not Significant

Legend: p>0.05 (Not Significant); p<0.05 (Significant)

Table 5 shows that none of the 20 comparisons reached statistical significance (all $p > .05$). The Mann–Whitney U and Kruskal–Wallis H tests detected no significant differences in overall fear of negative evaluation or in any of its three dimensions when TVSHS students were grouped by sex, grade level, major, residential location, or only-child status. Although these findings do not establish statistical equivalence across groups, they support making psychosocial support available to all TVSHS students. A school-wide intervention could build self-confidence, normalize mistakes during classroom and practical activities, and teach adaptive coping strategies. Individual screening could help identify students experiencing greater distress who may benefit from additional support.

Table 6

Comparison on Loneliness when grouped according to Profile

Profile Variables	*H/U*	p-Value	Interpretation
Sex			
Fear of Approval, Laughter, Criticism & Rejection	30191.000	0.517	Not Significant
Isolation & Lack of Companionship	26494.500	0.003	Significant
Lack of Intimacy & Understanding	28253.000	0.063	Not Significant
Loneliness	30914.000	0.844	Not Significant

Grade Level			
Fear of Approval, Laughter, Criticism & Rejection	28678.000	0.324	Not Significant
Isolation & Lack of Companionship	27514.500	0.082	Not Significant
Lack of Intimacy & Understanding	29003.000	0.434	Not Significant
Loneliness	27336.500	0.067	Not Significant
Type of Major Enrolled			
Fear of Approval, Laughter, Criticism & Rejection	2.139	0.343	Not Significant
Isolation & Lack of Companionship	0.789	0.674	Not Significant
Lack of Intimacy & Understanding	6.994	0.030	Significant
Loneliness	6.556	0.038	Significant
Residential Location			
Fear of Approval, Laughter, Criticism & Rejection	14.063	0.001	Significant
Isolation & Lack of Companionship	2.263	0.322	Not Significant
Lack of Intimacy & Understanding	0.174	0.917	Not Significant
Loneliness	5.926	0.052	Not Significant
Only Child			
Fear of Approval, Laughter, Criticism & Rejection	30829.000	0.817	Not Significant
Isolation & Lack of Companionship	30626.000	0.718	Not Significant
Lack of Intimacy & Understanding	30693.500	0.752	Not Significant
Loneliness	30000.500	0.456	Not Significant

Legend: p>0.05 (Not Significant); p<0.05 (Significant)

Table 6 shows that male TVSHS students reported greater isolation and lack of companionship than female students (U = 26,494.50, p = .003). Overall loneliness and the other dimensions did not differ significantly by sex. Differences across majors were significant for lack of intimacy and understanding (H = 6.994, p = .030) and overall loneliness (H = 6.556, p = .038). Peer acceptance, classroom integration, and social support may help explain these patterns, as Chen (2022) identified them as protective factors against loneliness. Residential location was associated with significant differences in the dimension covering concerns about approval, ridicule, criticism, and rejection (H = 14.063, p = .001). The results highlight distinct aspects of students' social experiences across demographic groups. Follow-up comparisons would be needed to identify which majors and residential groups differed.

Table 7

Comparison on Social Interaction Anxiety when grouped according to Profile

Profile Variables	*H/U*	p-Value	Interpretation
Sex			
Difficulty Making New Friends	28691.500	0.113	Not Significant
Avoidance & Initiation	29549.000	0.295	Not Significant
Fear of Judgement & Physical Symptoms	31051.000	0.910	Not Significant
Social Interaction Anxiety	29666.500	0.331	Not Significant
Grade Level			
Difficulty Making New Friends	28907.000	0.399	Not Significant
Avoidance & Initiation	28584.500	0.296	Not Significant
Fear of Judgement & Physical Symptoms	27858.000	0.131	Not Significant
Social Interaction Anxiety	30063.000	0.912	Not Significant
Type of Major Enrolled			
Difficulty Making New Friends	2.425	0.297	Not Significant
Avoidance & Initiation	3.661	0.160	Not Significant
Fear of Judgement & Physical Symptoms	1.057	0.589	Not Significant
Social Interaction Anxiety	1.835	0.400	Not Significant
Residential Location			
Difficulty Making New Friends	0.373	0.830	Not Significant
Avoidance & Initiation	11.384	0.003	Significant
Fear of Judgement & Physical Symptoms	1.105	0.576	Not Significant
Social Interaction Anxiety	6.014	0.049	Significant
Only Child			
Difficulty Making New Friends	29459.500	0.277	Not Significant
Avoidance & Initiation	30845.000	0.825	Not Significant
Fear of Judgement & Physical Symptoms	30094.500	0.490	Not Significant
Social Interaction Anxiety	31008.000	0.905	Not Significant

Legend: p>0.05 (Not Significant); p<0.05 (Significant)

Table 7 shows the comparison of respondents' social interaction anxiety in relation to their sex, grade level,

kind of major they take, residential location, and whether they are an only child. Only those profiles of respondents whose differences were significant were included in the discussion. It was found that residential location was a significant factor that affected respondents' scores on Avoidance and Initiation ($H = 11.384$, $p = 0.003$). This means that there were differences among respondents in their propensity to avoid certain situations and to initiate interpersonal interactions, depending on their residential locations. This might mean that their residential locations, which can affect their social environment, are why some avoid others while others do not. This concurs with the findings of Muthusamy et al. (2022), who proposed that social interaction anxiety results from the combined effects of personal, family, school, and sociocultural factors, rather than a single specific reason. This means that variations in living situations can influence how respondents view social interactions. Moreover, poor social interactions, including rejection, lack of social integration, and inadequate social support, as noted by Kang et al. (2025), can lead to social interaction anxiety by reducing self-confidence in social situations.

Additionally, there was another statistically significant difference by residential location for Social Interaction Anxiety ($H = 6.014$, $p = 0.049$). It can be inferred from this that there is variation in the level of social interaction anxiety experienced by students by place of residence. The results indicate that the social and environmental conditions in one's place of residence have an impact on the level of anxiety felt when interacting with others. The results are also like those reported by Muthusamy et al. (2022), which stated that social anxiety is caused by a combination of individual, family, educational institution, and sociocultural factors. In simple terms, the environment plays a role in teenagers' socialization.

Residential location was found to be insignificant in relation to the dimensions of Difficulty Making New Friends ($p = 0.830$) and Fear of Judgment and Physical Symptoms ($p = 0.576$). In addition, sex, grade, field of study, and being an only child did not make a statistical difference on any dimensions of social interaction anxiety as well as the overall score for social interaction anxiety ($p > 0.05$). These findings indicate that students' place of origin was the only factor that affected their ability to initiate and avoid social interactions, as well as overall social interaction anxiety, but not their problems with friendship or fear of judgment. The sex of the students, grades, academic programs, and whether they were only children had no impact on any type of social interaction anxiety. Similarly, the fear of negative evaluation is the most consistent cognitive variable predicting social interaction anxiety, according to Hou & Ge (2022), whereas the need for self-esteem is necessary to reduce anxiety during social interactions, according to Kernis (2024). Moreover, according to Huang (2022), the lack of emotion regulation results in social interaction anxiety.

Table 8
Correlational Matrix of the Three Variables

			Loneliness	Social Interaction Anxiety
Spearman's rho	Fear of Negative Evaluation	Correlation Coefficient	-.135**	-0.009
		Sig, (2-tailed)	0.003	0.833
		Interpretation	Strong Negative Correlation	Weak Correlation
	Loneliness	Correlation Coefficient		-.099*
		Sig, (2-tailed)		0.027
		Interpretation		Moderate Negative Correlation

Legend: 0.00–0.19 = Negligible Correlation; 0.20–0.39 = Weak Correlation; 0.40–0.59 = Moderate Correlation; 0.60–0.79 = Strong Correlation; 0.80–1.00 = Very Strong Correlation

Table 8 depicts the Spearman's rho correlation, which analyzes the relationship among Fear of Negative Evaluation, Loneliness, and Social Interaction Anxiety. Based on the results, a statistically significant, strong negative relationship was found between fear of negative evaluation and loneliness ($r = -0.135$, $p = 0.003$). The null hypothesis can be rejected because the p-value is less than the significance level (0.05). Hence, it can be concluded that there exists a statistically significant relationship between the two variables. It also means that if scores on one variable increase, scores on another variable will decrease. This suggests that fear of negative evaluation accounts for a substantial proportion of the variance in loneliness. According to Xu (2023), fear of

negative evaluation is one of the major predictors of loneliness because teens who experience fear of negative evaluation find it hard to integrate with the rest of the community.

Additionally, a statistically significant negative correlation was found between Loneliness and Social Interaction Anxiety ($r = -0.099$, $p = 0.027$). Although statistically significant, the correlation is moderate. The negative correlation implies that the two variables are inversely related, but only weakly. In other words, changes in one variable (loneliness) were related to only a very moderate change in another variable (social interaction anxiety). This finding is inconsistent with the results reported by Ahmed et al. (2023), who found that social interaction anxiety was not attributable to loneliness.

Table 9
Proposed Psychological Intervention Program

Key Results Area	Objectives	Strategies/ Program	Responsible Person/s	Success Indicators
High Fear of Negative Evaluation	Conduct orientation seminars on fear of negative evaluation, its causes, symptoms, and effects.	Psychological Awareness Seminar	Guidance Counselor	90% of participants demonstrate improved understanding of fear of negative evaluation based on the post-session assessment.
	Facilitate cognitive restructuring through Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), thought monitoring, and cognitive distortion identification.	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) Sessions	School Psychologist	90% of participants demonstrate reduced negative self-evaluative thoughts based on CBT worksheets and reflection journals.
	Conduct self-esteem enhancement activities through self-compassion exercises, positive affirmations, and strength-identification workshops.	Self-Esteem Enhancement Workshop	Guidance Counselor	90% of participants report increased self-confidence and positive self-perception in the post-program evaluation.
High Loneliness	Implement a peer mentoring and buddy system to promote social support and connectedness	Peer Mentoring and Buddy Program	Guidance Counselor; Class Advisers	90% of participants report increased peer interaction and a stronger sense of belonging.
	Conduct team-building activities, cooperative learning sessions, and support group discussions.	Social Connectedness and Team-Building Activities	Guidance Counselor; Peer Facilitators	90% of participants actively engage in group activities and demonstrate improved interpersonal relationships.
	Organize family engagement sessions to strengthen parent-child communication and emotional support.	Family Engagement and Communication Workshop	Guidance Office; Parents	90% of parents participate in the program, and students report improved family communication and emotional support.
High Social Interaction Anxiety	Conduct social skills training through role-playing, assertiveness training, active listening, and conversation practice.	Social Skills Development Program	Guidance Counselor; Peer Facilitators	90% of participants demonstrate improved communication skills and increased participation in classroom and group activities.
	Implement gradual exposure activities, including storytelling, classroom presentations, impromptu speaking, and constructive peer feedback	Graduated Exposure and Public Speaking Program		90% of participants report increased confidence and reduced anxiety during social interactions and public speaking.
	Conduct post-test evaluation, participant feedback sessions, and focus group discussions to assess program effectiveness.	Program Monitoring and Outcome Evaluation		90% Significant reduction in fear of negative evaluation, loneliness, and social interaction anxiety scores, with improved social confidence and interpersonal functioning.

Table 9 outlines a proposed school-based psychological intervention program developed in response to the high levels of fear of negative evaluation, loneliness, and social interaction anxiety reported by TVSHS students. The activities described focus on fear of negative evaluation and loneliness, with objectives, assigned personnel, and measurable indicators for each intervention. To address fear of negative evaluation, the guidance counselor would conduct a psychological awareness seminar and a self-esteem workshop, while the school psychologist would lead cognitive behavioral therapy sessions. Through case discussions, reflection journals, and structured exercises, students would learn to recognize negative self-evaluations, respond more realistically to anticipated criticism, and identify personal strengths.

To address loneliness, guidance counselors and class advisers would coordinate peer mentoring, buddy check-ins, and cooperative team-building activities. These activities would give students regular opportunities to build trust, develop supportive friendships, and strengthen their sense of belonging. Trained peer facilitators would work under staff supervision, with voluntary participation and clear procedures for referring students who need additional support. The program sets a proposed target of 90% of participants meeting the relevant success indicator for each activity. Evaluation would distinguish attendance and participation from changes in knowledge, self-confidence, fear of negative evaluation, and loneliness. Pre- and post-intervention measures, supplemented by participant feedback and follow-up assessments, could be used to track progress. Without a comparison group, any observed improvement could also reflect factors outside the program.

4. Conclusions

The respondents comprised a diverse population of TVSHS students, with almost equal representation by sex and number of siblings. Most of the respondents were in Grade 12 and were studying Liberal Arts and Service courses. The level of fear of negative evaluation was very high among the respondents, with the most important dimensions being fear of disapproval, laughter, criticism, and rejection. Loneliness was very high among the respondents, with isolation and lack of companionship being the important dimensions. Respondents also exhibited a very high degree of social interaction anxiety, with fear of judgment and physical symptoms proving to be the highest rated dimensions. Fear of negative evaluation did not vary significantly across respondents' demographic characteristics. On the other hand, significant variation was noted on the dimensions of loneliness and social interaction anxiety in terms of sex, academic discipline, and geographic setting. The fear of negative evaluation correlated significantly but negatively with loneliness, while no significant correlation existed between the former and social Interaction anxiety. Similarly, there was a significant but moderately negative correlation between loneliness and social interaction anxiety. A psychological intervention program based on these findings was proposed to mitigate the students' high fear of negative evaluation, loneliness, and social interaction anxiety.

Recommendations - The Technical-Vocational Senior High School learners may join school-based programs that can help them develop self-confidence, improve interpersonal communication, and enhance psychological health, thereby overcoming fear of negative judgment, loneliness, and social anxiety. Parents may be encouraged to engage in open dialogue and be emotionally available to help students become confident and capable of dealing with social and academic challenges. School counselors may pay special attention to students belonging to certain demographic groups where there were significant differences in certain dimensions of loneliness and social interaction anxiety by providing counseling and appropriate activities. School administrators may reinforce school-based mental health services that foster students' self-esteem, well-being, and positive interpersonal relationships. Future research can replicate this study in different contexts and among different people to examine other psychological variables influencing fear of negative evaluation, loneliness, and social interaction anxiety. Before fully implementing the proposed psychological intervention program, it may first be piloted with a small group of students from the Technical-Vocational Senior High School to test its feasibility, acceptability, and practicality. It is suggested that the results from the study and the psychological intervention program may be used as input to improve the current programs/services of the school's guidance and counseling center.

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