




Fear of Evaluation and Communication Apprehension: The Mediating Role of Social Skills Deficits

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E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The sentence “fear of evaluation may undermine an individual’s willingness to engage in social interactions...” (p. 2) uses causal language inappropriate for a correlational design. Consider rephrasing to reflect association rather than causation.

The sentence “Similarly, Husin and Khamis (2024) demonstrated...” (p. 2) repeats the finding already mentioned in the previous paragraph. Consider merging or eliminating redundancy to maintain narrative flow.

In the “Study Design and Participants” section (p. 4), while stratified random sampling is mentioned, the stratification variables (e.g., age, gender, academic major) are not described in depth. Elaborate on how stratification was operationalized.

In Table 2 (p. 8), the correlation table includes p-values but omits confidence intervals. Including CIs would enhance the statistical transparency of the bivariate relationships.

In Table 3 (p. 8), although all fit indices are acceptable, the authors do not report the SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual), which is increasingly recommended in SEM reporting. Consider adding this metric.

The paragraph on intervention implications (p. 11) would benefit from citing specific programs or models (e.g., social skills training curricula or CBT protocols) that have successfully addressed CA and social skill development.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

On p. 3, the authors refer to the Malaysian sociolinguistic context, but the sociocultural pressures related to English proficiency are underdeveloped. More detailed discussion of language ideology and status in Malaysia would contextualize findings more robustly.

In the paragraph following Table 1 (p. 7), the authors mention VIF values without presenting them in a table. Including a supplemental table with VIFs and tolerance values would enhance clarity and reproducibility.

On p. 10, the sentence “These parallel findings across educational and workplace settings suggest that fear of evaluation is a pervasive and stable predictor...” may be too broad. Temper this statement or add limitations based on cultural and situational contexts.

On p. 10, the authors state that “social skills deficits... further reinforce avoidance behaviors,” but do not discuss the possibility of reciprocal or bidirectional effects. A brief note on alternative mediation models (e.g., reciprocal causality) would enrich the analysis.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.