

# Public Speaking Anxiety of the Senior High School Students in Holy Cross College of Carigara Incorporated Carigara, Leyte

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## ABSTRACT

The study aimed to investigate the level of public speaking anxiety and the primary factors contributing to public speaking anxiety of the Senior High School students at Holy Cross College of Carigara, Incorporated, during the Academic Year 2023-2024. A descriptive-correlational quantitative research design was applied to determine the level of public speaking anxiety and the factors contributing to the public speaking anxiety. After a careful interpretation of data, the study revealed that the majority of Senior High School students at HCCCI exhibited moderate anxiety in public speaking. The primary factors contributing to this anxiety were fear of mistakes, fear of large crowds, lack of self-confidence, comparisons to others, and unmet teacher expectations. Notably, these factors were statistically significant concerning students' anxiety levels, confirming that moderate public speaking anxiety was present among the respondents. In conclusion, it is essential to prioritize the development of students' public speaking skills, enabling them to reach their full potential in both academic and professional endeavors. Strengthening these skills will empower students to excel further by confidently communicating to large audiences.

**Keywords:** *public speaking, anxiety level, factors contributing to fear of public speaking*

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## INTRODUCTION

Fear of public speaking, is a widespread phenomenon and believed to affect many people. Some individuals may feel a slight nervousness at the very thought of public speaking, while others experience full-on panic and fear (Black, 2019). Indeed, public speaking is quite common, since Fritscher (2023) also supports that fear of public speaking is quite common. Experts reveal that every person has some level of anxiety regarding public speaking. Consequently, Lungay (2023) contends that Senior High School students are experiencing high level of Public Speaking Anxiety which hinder their capacity to speak in public with confidence. The findings of Tamayo & Caber (2022) also reveal that students experienced a moderate level of speaking anxiety in their public speaking class which means anxiety level in public speaking is present.

On the international scenario about public speaking, Linder (2024) states that 77% of the US population feels some anxiety with public speaking. Gallego et al (2021) contend that fear of public speaking is experienced by the students. In addition, Sugiyati & Indriani (2021) underscored that the students experienced a medium level of public speaking anxiety.

The 21st century skills are tools that can be universally applied to enhance ways of thinking, learning, working and living in the world. Specifically, these skills are critical thinking/reasoning, creativity/creative thinking, problem solving, metacognition, collaboration, communication and global citizenship (Vivekanandan, 2019). With this, Senior High School serves as a preparation before entering the higher education or tertiary level. It offers different tracks where students can choose based on their interests or in line with their preferred course in college (Sunga, 2023). Also, students are prepared for college and are equipped with the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills. In order to develop successful members of the global society, education shall base on a framework of the Four C's: communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creative thinking. These four skills mentioned are essential for modern students to succeed in school and the workplace. They often make the most significant impact in setting the students apart when applying for positions and starting their careers (Hummel, 2024). Subsequently, learning the art of public speaking is essential to students. Asine (2022) reveals that public speaking skills are just as important to students as it is to workers because they help improve communication skills, develop leadership skills, boost confidence and self-esteem, help overcome fear and anxiety, help students form connections, improve students to speak better, develop social skills, and strengthen ability to organize and lead events. Through this, 21<sup>st</sup>-century learners will be able to perform better upon mastering public speaking skills.

The Senior High School Curriculum include Oral Communication in Context as one of the Core Subjects that focuses on the communication skills. According to the Department of Education's Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCS), it is highlighted particularly in the performance standard of the core subject Oral Communication in Context that students must be able to demonstrate effective use of communicative strategy in a variety of speech situations and proficiently delivers various speeches using the principles of effective speech delivery. For the students, improving the basic skills in speaking still provides benefits and as a preparation for real-life scenarios. Furthermore, Bacatan et al. (2023) state that students' oral communication level refers to their proficiency and competence in effectively expressing themselves through spoken language. It encompasses their ability to articulate thoughts, ideas, and information, fluently, and coherently. A high level of oral communication indicates that

students can communicate effectively and confidently in spoken English. Moreover, Tomas (2023) points out that the Grade 11 students have partially mastered the contents and the skills in Oral Communication in Context.

In order to improve oral communication, McCreary (2024) suggests that upon learning the basics of communication skills, which are to know what communication is, is also to have the courage to speak and to practice. Upon engaging with the audience, it suggests to make eye contact, to use gestures, not to send mixed messages, to be aware of the body language, to manifest constructive attitudes and beliefs, and to develop practical listening skills. Upon the use of words when communicating, it was highlighted to enunciate the words, pronounce the words correctly, use the right words, slow the speech down, develop the voice, animate the voice, and use appropriate volume. There are also powerful strategies to improve communication skills that Brower (2023) recommends. These are the following: (1) articulate yourself brilliantly, (2) express oneself with humility, (3) listen to understand, (4) manage the flow of the exchange of information, (5) someone's influence is significant.

Despite the mechanisms, strategies and different performance tasks in the classroom to improve oral communication, fear of public speaking still exists. A report from Lungay (2023) mentions that the students were worried about making mistakes when speaking in public and being nervous when preparing for a speech. Similarly, Ong & Zambas (2021) point out that all of the teachers' assessment results showed observation among students on their public speaking anxiety in their classes. They observed the apprehension through the students' verbal and non-verbal language. Students tend to shy away, refuse to speak, and request to code-switch. While speaking, the students stuttered, stammered, had difficulty maintaining eye contact, and exhibited poor posture.

These problems were evident among the students in the school where this study occurred. Based on the records on the performance task and oral examination where students deliver public speaking activities, students' grades are low. When informally asked, students expressed their fear of public speaking. Several studies have explored the causes of this problem; however, the researcher focused on a different setting—Holy Cross College of Carigara, Incorporated—to assess the fear of public speaking among Senior High School students. There has been an unresolved problem among students regarding public speaking. A research study by Bugayong and Ibojo (2023) highlights that although public speaking is an essential skill for secondary education students, many still struggle with fear and anxiety when delivering presentations or speeches. Thus, Fagsao & Mi-ing (2023) contend that most individuals are not born public speakers. They are educated to develop into one. Although numerous studies on the fear of public speaking exist, the researcher was motivated to conduct this study to address the lack of such research specifically in Carigara, Leyte. Through this, the dilemma of the fear of public speaking will be addressed by honing public speaking skills.

Additionally, despite the wide range of research studies on public speaking in urban areas, there remains a lack of studies focusing on rural areas like Carigara, Leyte. Students in private institutions like Holy Cross College of Carigara, Incorporated may be experiencing different difficulties. These struggles may include limited access and training to public speaking, low opportunities to develop public speaking skills, and other environmental and cultural influences. Despite potential challenges, no empirical data documents the prevalence of public speaking anxiety among Senior High School students at HCCCI. This gap provides

educators with limited understanding of how to address the issue effectively. Moreover, this study seeks to fill this gap by investigating the levels of public speaking anxiety among Senior High School students at Holy Cross College of Carigara, Incorporated. It also aims to identify the primary factors contributing to anxiety and analyze their relationship to the students' anxiety levels.

The findings will offer locally relevant insights, allowing for the development of targeted interventions to help students overcome public speaking anxiety and improve their communication skills. As a result, the study's outcomes will be valuable to the faculty of HCCCI in addressing students' fear of public speaking. By addressing these challenges, educators can modify teaching techniques to tackle public speaking anxiety and foster a positive, inclusive classroom environment for all students.

Mastering public speaking skills offers numerous benefits for students, fostering personal, social, and intellectual growth. On a personal level, addressing anxiety related to public speaking boosts self-confidence and enhances self-esteem. Additionally, learning to control emotions provides a significant advantage in communication, leading to a more positive outlook in both academic settings and life. Socially, as students overcome their fear of public speaking, they become more effective communicators, which reduces anxiety and builds confidence. This, in turn, strengthens interpersonal relationships, as improved communication skills foster stronger connections with others. Moreover, intellectually, mastering public speaking hones critical thinking abilities, resulting in improved academic performance and enhanced problem-solving skills. Overall, public speaking not only empowers students in their personal and social lives but also contributes to their intellectual development.

This will also benefit the community, as students who master public speaking will be better equipped to communicate and contribute ideas for the community's improvement. Students who are no longer afraid to speak in public will become effective advocates, actively participating in community forums and other public speaking activities, promoting positive change and engagement.

## **Research Questions**

This study aimed to assess the fear of public speaking anxiety among Senior High School students at Holy Cross College of Carigara, Incorporated, Carigara, Leyte. Specifically, it answered the following questions:

1. What is the level of public speaking anxiety among Senior High School students?
2. What are the primary factors that contribute to the public speaking anxiety among Senior High School students in HCCCI?
3. Is there a significant relationship on the identified factors and the anxiety levels of Senior High School students?
4. What proposed activities are designed based on the study's findings to overcome public speaking anxiety?

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

The researcher used a combination of descriptive-correlational quantitative research design to systematically and objectively measure and collect numerical data addressing the research questions. Specifically, the study utilized a combination of descriptive and correlational research designs to assess public speaking anxiety levels, identify contributing factors, and examine the relationships between these factors and anxiety levels among Senior High School students at Holy Cross College of Carigara, Incorporated (HCCCI). The descriptive research design was used to measure and describe the levels of public speaking anxiety among the students. By administering the Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA) tool, the study was able to quantify the anxiety levels. This provided a comprehensive understanding of the overall public speaking anxiety experienced by the students. In addition, the researcher employed a correlational research design to investigate the relationships between identified factors contributing to public speaking anxiety and the students' anxiety levels.

### The Sample and Locale of the Study

The researchers conducted the study in the Senior High School Department of Holy Cross College of Carigara, Incorporated, Carigara, Leyte, for the academic year 2023-2024. The respondents of the study were the entire 456 students of the Senior High School Department. HCCCI is formerly known as Holy Cross Academy (HCA). This school is precisely located at Rebolledo Street, Brgy. Ponong, Carigara, Leyte, Philippines and specifically situated beside Holy Cross Parish, the municipality's parish church. This is the only private Catholic institution in Carigara, Leyte that offers quality education from Junior High School to College. This is owned by the Archdiocese of Palo and administered by the sisters of St. Francis Perpetual Adoration, whose patron saints are Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception and Saint Francis of Assisi. Furthermore, the study employed complete enumeration for a complete statistical data about their anxiety level in public speaking and the primary factors contributing to their anxiety level in public speaking.

### Research Instrument

The research tool utilized in this study to measure individual's anxiety related to public speaking is the Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA) initially developed by McCroskey (1970). The PRPSA was chosen as the tool to measure individual's anxiety in public speaking because of its tested psychometric properties, validity, and reliability making it accurate and aligned with the first objective of the study. The PRPSA was administered to the respondents without modifying the items in the research tool; therefore, it was adopted. The respondents of the survey responded to a series of 34 items on a Likert scale ranging from 5 (Strongly Agree), 4 (Agree), 3 (Neutral), 2 (Disagree), and 1 (Strongly Disagree) to assess the anxiety level of the students in public speaking. Moreover, to determine the factors contributing to the anxiety levels of the students in public speaking, the study adapted the factors from the online article of Genard (2019) entitled 10 Causes of Speech Anxiety that Create Fear of Public

Speaking. The researcher explicitly instructed participants to check only the factor or factors they believed contributed to their anxiety.

## Gathering of Data

Upon securing the parents' consent, the student respondents were oriented carefully on how to answer Part I and Part II of the research tool. The parents' consent was attached to the copy of the research tool to ensure that each respondent obtained permission from their parents or legal guardian. The researcher informed and guided the students that once done answering the survey questionnaire, and they may return them to the researcher. Furthermore, data interpretation was initially carried out using Microsoft Excel to compute the levels of anxiety and the factors contributing to public speaking anxiety among the students. Descriptive statistics were applied to summarize and describe the main features of the dataset. Microsoft Excel was employed to ensure accurate computations and to save time in the process.

There are three levels of public speaking anxiety – specifically High Anxiety Level, Moderate Anxiety Level, and Low Anxiety Level. A High Anxiety Level indicates that all the negative indicators of anxiety were experienced by the respondents, while a Moderate Anxiety Level means that most of the negative indicators were experienced. A Low Anxiety Level suggests that only a few of the negative indicators were experienced by the respondents. To transform the Likert scale into scores, the researcher calculated the mean for each item in the PRPSA and then computed the overall mean, which reflects the anxiety level in public speaking among Senior High School students at HCCCI. Descriptive tools, such as the mean, were used to measure the anxiety level, with the mean scores categorizing the public speaking anxiety levels of the respondents.

RANGE	ANXIETY LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
3.66 – 5.00	High	All of the negative indicators on anxiety level were experienced
2.33 – 3.65	Moderate	Most of the negative indicators on anxiety level were experienced
1.00 – 2.32	Low	Few of the negative indicators on anxiety level were experienced

Part II addressed the question regarding the primary factors contributing to public speaking anxiety among Senior High School students. The responses were presented using a checklist and analyzed through frequency counts for each item, which were then converted into percentages. The top 5 factors, as shown in the tabular results, were considered the primary contributors to the anxiety levels in public speaking.

To determine the relationship between public speaking anxiety levels and their causes, both Chi-square and contingency coefficients were used. The Chi-square test helped identify the relationship between anxiety levels and the primary causes of public speaking anxiety among Senior High School students, addressing the third objective of the study. Meanwhile, the contingency coefficient was used to assess whether the anxiety level and the causes of public speaking anxiety are dependent or independent of each other.

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher developed a lesson exemplar to address the issue of public speaking anxiety. This exemplar can be incorporated into teachers' lessons and tailored to meet the specific needs of students. Teachers have the flexibility to modify the techniques and strategies in the exemplar to enhance students' public speaking skills. The action plan primarily focuses on integrating technology, encouraging students to speak in English, and fostering an inclusive environment that discourages judgment and unnecessary comments from others.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Anxiety Level in Public Speaking Among SHS Students in HCCCI

Table 1 presents the level of public speaking anxiety among HCCCI Senior High School students. The findings indicate that their anxiety is generally at a moderate level, suggesting that most students experience most negative indicators associated with public speaking. This highlights the prevalence of anxiety symptoms among Senior High School students at Holy Cross College of Carigara, Incorporated.

Of the 34 indicators, the statement *“My heart beats very fast just as I start a speech,”* which recorded the highest mean score of 3.85 and corresponds to a High Anxiety Level, holds significant implications. Given that 156 out of 456 respondents reported High Anxiety Levels, this implies that the SHS students experience increased heart rate, palpitation, and nervousness when it comes to public speaking. They already feel nervous just as they begin the public speaking, which is a clear sign of anxiety in public speaking. Since the students are nervous just as they begin a speech, they need to develop the ability to be calm as they start public speaking. This result is supported by Montijo (2022), who asserts that many people experience some level of anxiety when speaking in front of others. Public speaking can induce nervousness even in the most experienced speakers and presenters, causing symptoms ranging from a slightly elevated heart rate to clammy palms. For some people, the fear of public speaking can become intense and even debilitating. The anxiety it causes can start to seep into their daily lives and affect how they interact at work, school, or even events, which is a normal response when talking in front of a crowd. Nguyen (2022) supports this claim, stating that many individuals who converse effortlessly in everyday situations become fearful when standing before a group to deliver a speech.

While students may experience varying levels of anxiety, there are strategies to help reduce it. One practical approach is virtual reality (VR) therapy. According to Cuncic (2023), VR therapy can significantly alleviate public speaking anxiety. Research reveals that student

undergoing VR therapy experienced positive outcomes in as little as a week, with just one to 12 sessions. Furthermore, the study found VR sessions to be both practical and less invasive compared to traditional in-person treatment methods.

As to the level of anxiety in public speaking experienced by the Senior High School students with the statement “*Right after giving a speech, I feel that I have had a pleasant experience.*” garnered the lowest mean with 2.48 which is described as Moderate Anxiety Level, since 135 out of 456 respondents indicated this result. This suggests that some Senior High School students view public speaking as a somewhat pleasant experience. Despite exhibiting a Moderate Anxiety Levels in this area, they still perceive public speaking positively. This suggests that students continue to view public speaking positively, perceiving it as an enjoyable experience. Despite the fear they may encounter, they often find it to be a rewarding and fulfilling endeavor afterward.

This is supported by Jayan (2022), who emphasizes that public speaking is one of the most challenging skills to master. However, once learned, it can significantly contribute to the development of one's personality. It will also be beneficial to create and propel someone. Additionally, Taylor (2023) reinforces the idea of public speaking as a pleasant experience as it boosts self-assurance to someone. Overcoming the fear of speaking in public builds self-assurance and resilience, allowing individuals to tackle challenges with a newfound belief in themselves. Additionally, developing this skill instills a sense of self-assurance that extends beyond the stage. It empowers individuals to conquer fear, speak with conviction, and confidently embrace new challenges, boosting their self-confidence and self-belief.

Generally, the anxiety level in public speaking among the SHS students in HCCCI is moderate. It denotes that SHS students' anxiety level in public speaking is still evident despite its moderate level. This implies that action must be taken before the anxiety worsens or negatively impacts their academic performance, particularly during recitations and oral examinations. The moderate anxiety of the students still affects the learning process of the students as it limits the full potential of the students when expressing their thoughts and ideas. This is further supported by the study of Balakrishnan (2022), which reveals that Engineering student-respondents experience a moderate level of public speaking anxiety, as well as by Concepcion et al. (2023), who found that Science Major students also exhibit a moderate level of anxiety in public speaking. These claims are supported by Tomayo (2022), who argues that Senior High School students experience a moderate level of speaking anxiety in their public speaking class, primarily influenced by a fear of negative feedback.

**Table 1.** Anxiety Level in Public Speaking Among the SHS Students in HCCCI

Indicators	Mean	Level
1. My heart beats very fast just as I start a speech.	3.85	H
2. While giving a speech, I get so nervous I forget facts I really know.	3.80	H
3. My heart beats very fast while I present a speech.	3.79	H
4. I feel anxious while waiting to give my speech.	3.79	H
5. There are certain parts of my body that feel tense and rigid while giving a speech.	3.74	H
6. Realizing that only a little time remains in a speech makes me very tense and anxious.	3.74	H
7. I have no fear of giving a speech.	3.71	H

8. I experience considerable anxiety while sitting in the room just before my speech starts.	3.71	H
9. While preparing for giving a speech, I feel tense and nervous.	3.68	H
10. I feel relaxed while giving a speech.	3.66	H
11. I get anxious when I think about a speech coming up.	3.60	M
12. I am in constant fear of forgetting what I prepared to say.	3.58	M
13. When I make a mistake while giving a speech, I find it hard to concentrate on the parts that follow.	3.56	M
14. My hands tremble when I am giving a speech.	3.54	M
15. I get anxious if someone asks me something about my topic that I don't know.	3.53	M
16. I enjoy preparing for a speech.	3.50	M
17. My thoughts become confused and jumbled when I am giving a speech.	3.48	M
18. During an important speech I experience a feeling of helplessness building up inside me.	3.48	M
19. I do not dread giving a speech.	3.44	M
20. My mind is clear when giving a speech.	3.41	M
21. I do poorly on speeches because I am anxious.	3.39	M
22. I feel anxious when the teacher announces the date of a speaking assignment.	3.37	M
23. I have trouble falling asleep the night before a speech.	3.35	M
24. When the instructor announces a speaking assignment in class, I can feel myself getting tense.	3.34	M
25. I breathe faster just before starting a speech.	3.33	M
26. I feel comfortable and relaxed in an hour or so just before giving a speech.	3.30	M
27. I look forward to giving a speech.	3.26	M
28. I feel tense when I see the words "speech" and "public speech" on a course outline when studying.	3.25	M
29. I perspire just before starting a speech.	3.25	M
30. While giving a speech, I know I can control my feelings of tension and stress.	3.18	M
31. I face the prospect of giving a speech with confidence.	3.15	M
32. I feel that I am in complete possession of myself while giving a speech.	3.13	M
33. Although I am nervous just before starting a speech, I soon settle down after starting and feel calm and comfortable.	2.66	M
34. Right after giving a speech, I feel that I have had a pleasant experience.	2.48	M
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.44</b>	<b>M</b>

## PRIMARY FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO PUBLIC SPEAKING ANXIETY AMONG SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

**Table 2.** Primary factors contributing to public speaking anxiety among SHS students in HCCCI

Indicators	Frequency Count	Percentage	Rank
Fear of mistakes	421	92.32%	1
Afraid of a large crowd	406	89.04%	2
Lack of self-confidence	394	86.40%	3
Comparing yourself to others	326	71.49%	4
Unmet expectations from teachers	311	68.20%	5
Expectation from others	298	65.35%	6
Past failures	297	65.13%	7
Dissatisfaction with ones abilities	256	56.14%	8
Dissatisfaction	253	55.48%	9
Incorrect English pronunciation	237	51.97%	10
Poor or insufficient preparation	214	46.93%	11
Self-consciousness in front of large groups.	209	45.83%	12
Feeling discomfort with your own abilities	183	40.13%	13

From the checklist on the factors contributing to the anxiety level in public speaking of the SHS students in HCCCI, a detailed discussion is presented to highlight the primary factors contributing to the public speaking anxiety and the identified results of the least considered indicators among the others. The discussion explores the findings and suggests strategies to address the key issue about anxiety in public speaking.

The data indicate that fear of mistakes is the first primary factor of public speaking anxiety, with 421 respondents (92.32%) identifying it as a significant factor. This percentage ranks highest among all other causes reported by the 456 respondents surveyed. This reflects a broader fear of failure, suggesting that students are afraid of making mistakes when speaking in front of others. It further implies that people are generally scared of speaking in front of a crowd as they dread committing mistakes because of societal pressure and lack of experience or preparation and mastery. This is true as Malik (2023) claims that the fear of failure is a

common fear that often goes hand in hand with the fear of public speaking, which many people struggle with and can be pretty debilitating.

The second primary factor contributing to public speaking anxiety among the SHS students in HCCCI is the fear of large crowds, which was claimed by 406 respondents (89.04%). This finding suggests that many students dread the prospect of speaking in front of large groups of people, which added to their anxiety in public speaking. The fact that public speaking inherently involves addressing an audience, whether big or small, underscores the importance of addressing this specific fear as a critical component of managing public speaking anxiety. This finding aligns with Hilton (2020), who highlights that, as a culture, people perceive speaking in front of a group as intimidating. The more it is discussed, thought about, and reinforced as one of the greatest fears, the more individuals will come to believe it. With this, the study feels the need for students to address this and develop their public speaking skills instead of dreading the idea of it.

Ranking third among the primary factors contributing for public speaking anxiety is the lack of self-confidence, with 394 respondents (86.4%) identifying it as a key issue. This indicates that many students have less confidence. Developing self-confidence is therefore crucial to students to effectively manage and overcome their fear of public speaking. Developing the self-confidence will be a great help to overcome public speaking anxiety. As Tomich (2023) argues that a lack of public speaking confidence, whether in front of peers or strangers, is considered a form of social anxiety disorder. This highlights the need to provide students with more opportunities to build self-confidence and improve their communication skills. Dhu (2024) notes that while public speaking can be daunting, confidence serves as a powerful tool to ease the process. It helps in three key ways: reducing nervousness, fostering connection with the audience, and ensuring that the message resonates.

The fourth primary factor contributing to public speaking anxiety among Senior High School students is the tendency to compare oneself to others, with 326 respondents (71.49%) identifying this as a key factor. It is unavoidable for students to compare their public speaking skills against their peers, especially in an environment where some individuals are naturally gifted speakers. In contrast, others may dread speaking in front of a crowd. This comparison can lead to feelings of inadequacy and increased anxiety, as students may fear not measuring up to those who seem more confident or articulate. Addressing this issue is vital, as fostering a supportive environment that encourages personal, social, and intellectual growth rather than competition can help alleviate public speaking anxiety and enhance communication skills.

Thus, Cruze (2024) concurs with this, emphasizing that there is a biological reason why individuals are prone to comparing themselves to others. The brain uses comparison as a way to assess how one measures up to others. Most of these calculations are made in a split second, often without individuals even realizing it. In addition, Stokes (2020) reveals that comparing oneself to others is a fleeting experience. She suggests several tips for avoiding this, including managing the inner critic, becoming one's own best friend, keeping a record of achievements, practicing self-care, and being proactive.

The fifth primary factor contributing to public speaking anxiety among SHS students is unmet expectations from teachers, with 311 respondents (68.20%) citing it as one of the significant factors. This implies that students feel pressured to meet the expectations and standards set by teachers in public speaking, which can intensify their anxiety levels. When

students feel incapable of meeting their teachers' expectations, they often fear failure, which may lead them to avoid speaking activities. In this regard, Davies (2024) argues that unmet teacher expectations can significantly affect students' academic performance and emotional well-being. When students perceive they have fallen short of these standards, it can result in decreased motivation, heightened anxiety, and a diminished sense of self-worth.

Thus, addressing this issue is essential, especially on the part of the students. Promoting an inclusive environment where judgment is hindered from fostering which will most likely encourage the students to develop their skills in public speaking and will make them feel the urge to meet particular standards of their teachers. Teachers' expectations play a crucial role in student's success, as Johnson et al. (2021) reveal that students' self-perceptions as learners can be significantly influenced by how teachers communicate their expectations. Furthermore, they emphasize that when teachers express confidence in their students' ability to succeed, students are more likely to believe in their own potential and feel motivated to achieve their goals. It strongly suggests that students need validation and supportive individuals who believe in them to boost their motivation and drive for success.

Therefore, the primary factors contributing to public speaking anxiety among SHS students at HCCCI—fear of making mistakes, fear of large crowds, lack of self-confidence, comparison to others, and unmet expectations from teachers—reflect the challenges students face and highlight broader issues related to public speaking anxiety.

While there are primary factors contributing to the anxiety levels among students, the study also identifies the least significant factors, including self-consciousness in front of large groups and discomfort with their own abilities.

Regarding self-consciousness in front of large groups, only 209 out of 456 student-respondents, or 45.83%, identified it as one of the bottom two factors contributing to public speaking anxiety. This suggests that, among the factors listed, self-consciousness is one of the least significant, indicating that relatively few students feel self-conscious when speaking in public. However, it still implies that students are concerned about their self-image and how they will be perceived by others. Even though this indicator ranks among the bottom two factors, it is important to address it, considering the potential mental health implications for students. For as Katz (2024) supports that student experiencing public speaking anxiety say they are concerned they will be embarrassed if they talk. They say they are worried they will make a mistake, look stupid to others, or be judged unattractive. Some students say they get upset thinking about others looking at them or being the center of attention. Others believe the belief that no one would be interested in anything they would have to say, or that nothing they would say would be worthwhile. To overcome self-consciousness, since there are students who are conscious in front of large crowds, Campbell (2023) suggests ways how to address this situation, which include to identifying the triggers, stopping the habit of comparing oneself to others, communicating with oneself, looking outward, cutting the negative self-talk, practicing positive affirmations, giving oneself a reality check, accepting oneself, and showing up for oneself.

The indicator "feeling discomfort with one's abilities" is the least significant factor contributing to public speaking anxiety among SHS students at HCCCI. Only 183 out of 456 respondents, or 40.13%, identified this as a contributing factor. This suggests that, although less than half of the students reported this as a cause of anxiety, there is still a need for students

to build confidence in their abilities by honing and practicing their public speaking skills. This is supported by Noack (2023), who points out that just like how more socializing can make someone feel more comfortable speaking in public, so can more experience with public speaking. He further emphasized that the more experience someone gains from speaking in front of a crowd, the more confident they become in their abilities, which can help reduce anxiety. Becoming accustomed to receiving attention is crucial in this process. However, Gourlay (2020) disagrees, noting that for many individuals, it can feel nearly impossible to put them in situations where they have to speak in front of others. This is often due to the fear of appearing foolish or not sounding as knowledgeable as they had hoped.

### **Relationship Between the Identified Factors of Public Speaking Anxiety and Students' Anxiety Levels in Public Speaking**

**Table 3.** Relationship Between the Primary Causes of Public Speaking Anxiety and Students' Anxiety Levels in Public Speaking

<b>Comparison</b>	<b>Chi-Square Value</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>p-value</b>	<b>Contingency Coefficient</b>	<b>Significance</b>
<b>Causes of Anxiety and Anxiety Level</b>	152.215	8	< .001	0.291	Highly Significant

Table 3 shows the data on the relationship between the primary factors contributing to public speaking anxiety and students' anxiety levels in public speaking. The computed Chi-Square value is 152.215 with the df=8, p-value <.001. The contingency coefficient is 0.291, which shows weak to moderate association between the identified factors and public anxiety levels. In statistical terms, a contingency coefficient ranges from zero (no association) to 1 (perfect association), meaning that the value of 0.291, while Highly Significant, indicates that the relationship is not very strong but still meaningful, which means that the relationship of the level of public speaking anxiety of the students and the identified primary causes of the students is related to each other. This implies that the primary factors identified as contributing to the fear of public speaking significantly affect the anxiety levels among the Senior High School students at HCCCI.

The highly significant Chi-square results mean that the particular identified causes of public speaking anxiety tend to have a specific anxiety level. Fear of making mistakes is associated with a high anxiety level, while fear of large crowds, lack of self-confidence, comparison to others, and unmet expectations from teachers are linked to a moderate anxiety level.

### **Output to Address the Public Speaking Anxiety**

To address the issue of public speaking anxiety among students, the study's findings emphasize the integration of technology, specifically Virtual Reality, into teaching, as well as encouraging students to speak in English and promoting an inclusive classroom environment. These strategies can be incorporated into teachers' lessons to help develop students' public speaking skills. This section presents the study's proposed solution to alleviate public speaking anxiety, including a lesson exemplar created by the researcher, which can be adapted and contextualized for classroom use.

Lesson exemplars were crafted to address the public speaking anxiety which targets for the improvement of public speaking skills. The lesson exemplars focus on the content standard: Learners realizes the rigors of crafting one's speech. And also, the performance standard of the lesson exemplar is: Learners proficiently deliver various speeches using the principles of effective speech delivery. Additionally, the lesson exemplar covers topics such as the Stages of the Speaking Process, Types of Speech, and Principles of Effective Speech Delivery. Each lesson exemplar is designed to help students achieve specific competencies. In Lesson Exemplar 1, students are expected to identify the principles of effective speech delivery, exemplify situations that demonstrate these principles, and apply them in their own delivery, focusing on articulation, modulation, stage presence, facial expressions, gestures, movements, and rapport with the audience (*EN11/12OC-IIcj-26*). In Lesson Exemplar 2, students will determine the stages of the speaking process, explain their importance, and observe them in practice. For Lesson Exemplar 3, students will distinguish between types of speeches (*EN11/12OC-IIcj-23*), relate them to various situations, and observe the stages of the speaking process. The content standard, performance standard, and several learning competencies with their corresponding codes are aligned with the Department of Education's Most Essential Learning Competencies for Oral Communication in Context. Rubrics for speech delivery are also included in the latter part of the lesson exemplar.

## CONCLUSION

The main objective of this study was to assess the level of public speaking anxiety among the 456 Senior High School students in Holy Cross College of Carigara, Incorporated for the academic year 2023-2024.

The findings of the survey revealed that the students experience a moderate level of anxiety in public speaking, indicating that most of the negative indicators were felt by the respondents. This indicates that while their anxiety is not severe, it remains significant and needs attention to prevent it from escalating or adversely affecting their academic performance, particularly during recitations and oral examinations. The findings of this study are valuable for future research as they provide baseline data for developing preventive measures to manage and reduce public speaking anxiety. Despite being moderate, this level of anxiety still impacts students' learning process, hindering their ability to fully express their thoughts and ideas.

Furthermore, the survey results highlight the primary factors contributing to the students' public speaking anxiety, including fear of making mistakes, fear of large crowds, lack of self-confidence, comparing oneself to others, and unmet expectations from teachers.

The data reveal that the first factor contributing to public speaking anxiety among SHS students at HCCCI, is the fear of making mistakes. This reflects a broader fear of failure,

suggesting that students are apprehensive about committing errors while speaking to others. This fear is often rooted in societal pressure, as well as a lack of experience, preparation, or mastery, which intensifies their anxiety. The second most significant factor is fear of large crowds. This finding indicates that many students are particularly anxious about addressing a large audience, further heightening their public speaking anxiety. Since public speaking inherently involves engaging with an audience, addressing this fear is essential in helping students manage their anxiety effectively. The third most significant factor is a lack of self-confidence. Many students face challenges in trusting their abilities, which hinders their capacity to navigate the demands of public speaking. Therefore, fostering self-confidence is essential in helping students overcome their fears and develop strong communication skills. Fourth is the tendency to compare oneself to others. In environments where some individuals excel at public speaking while others struggle, students may compare their abilities to their peers, leading to feelings of inadequacy and heightened anxiety. Addressing this issue involves fostering a supportive and inclusive environment that encourages personal growth over competition, helping students feel more confident and less anxious. Fifth, unmet expectations from teachers rank as the fifth key factor. Students often feel pressured to meet the standards and expectations of their teachers, which can amplify their anxiety. When students believe they cannot meet these expectations, they may develop a fear of failure, resulting in avoidance of speaking activities. To mitigate this, creating realistic and supportive expectations is vital to reducing anxiety and encouraging participation in public speaking.

The relationship between the anxiety level in public speaking and the primary factors contributing to it was found to be highly significant. It suggests that public speaking anxiety is not a shallow-level type of fear when it comes to public speaking. This implies that the more substantial level the students experience the factors contributing to their public speaking anxiety, the higher the anxiety level of public speaking. This indicates a correlation between the level of public speaking anxiety among students and the identified primary causes. It suggests that the key factors that contribute to the fear of public speaking significantly influence the anxiety levels of Senior High School students at HCCCI.

## **Conclusion**

The key findings of this study contributes to the body of knowledge in the context of public speaking. Despite the result of not being highly anxious in public speaking and with moderate level of anxiety, the presence of anxiety is still significant. This can still impact the performance and ability of Senior High School students to complete public speaking tasks. Anticipatory anxiety is a major issue for students and is likely to hinder their performance during public speaking activities. The external and internal pressure when they face a large audience amplifies their anxiety, which may potentially hinder their academic performance and may limit their full potential. Students may feel overwhelmed by self-consciousness and comparisons to others, which undermine their confidence and elevate their anxiety levels during public speaking. Addressing the factors contributing to public speaking anxiety could directly reduce anxiety levels in public speaking contexts. Therefore, it is crucial to focus on enhancing students' public speaking skills to help them unlock their full potential in both academic and personal endeavors.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made;

1. Incorporate public speaking in different subjects so that students will have longer exposures to public speaking;
2. Integrate technology such as Virtual Reality in honing public speaking skills to be able to have simulation or practice of facing an audience artificially before the actual exposure to a crowd;
3. Utilize the lesson exemplar, which is the output of the study, to practice students in public speaking;
4. Promote inclusivity where judgment and unnecessary comments are strictly discouraged inside the classroom to make students feel safe with unnecessary responses among others;
5. Encourage students to regularly speak in English to build fluency and confidence when talking to others or to an audience; and
6. Conduct further studies on public speaking through quantitative and qualitative research. It should emphasize on the anxiety level in public speaking and the significant factors contributing to public speaking anxiety.

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