

# What makes one student lonely and the other not?

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## Introduction

Transition from high school to university  
 → adaptations to someone's environment and social network  
 → may lead to feelings of being lonely<sup>1</sup>.

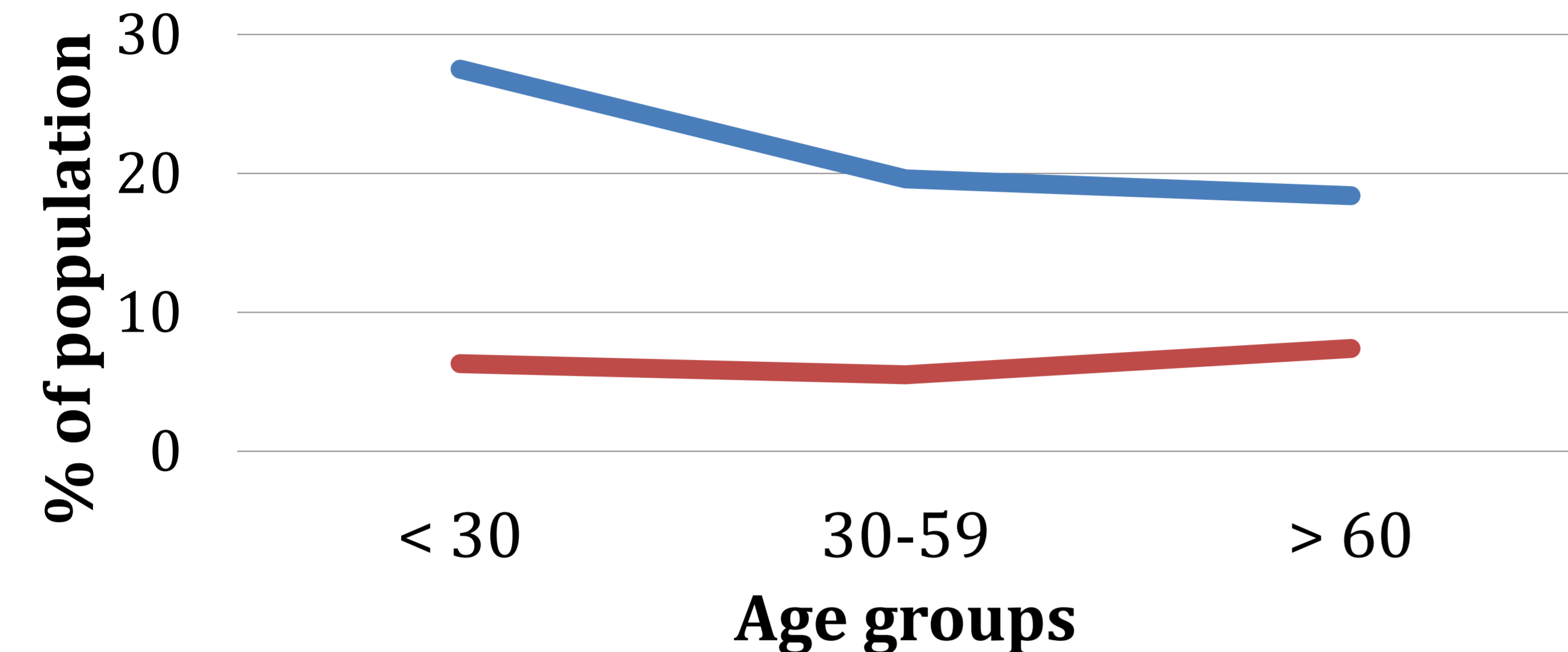


Figure 1. Prevalence of loneliness across age groups. Red and blue lines represent severe and moderately lonely rates, respectively.<sup>2</sup>

### Aim:

❖ To investigate the combined influence of situational, personality, social network and mental health factors in relation to loneliness among university students as well as their unique contributions.

### Research question:

❖ Which factors play a unique role in loneliness among university students?

## Methods

### Participants

- ❖ Cross-sectional survey study
- ❖ N = 481 university students
  - 22.5 years old (SD = 2.87)
  - 71.7% female

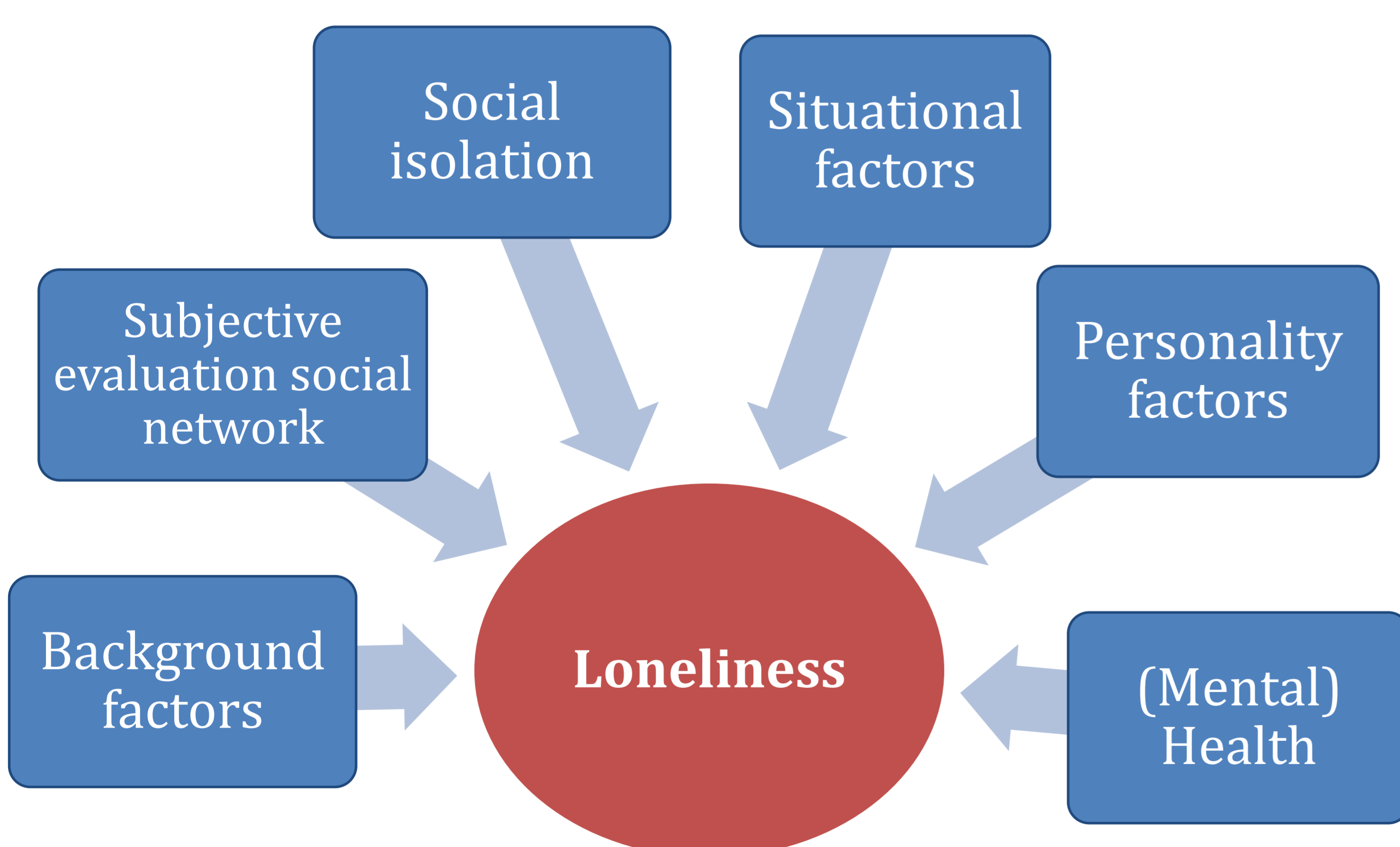


Figure 2. Determinants of loneliness addressed in this study.

### Data analysis

- ❖ Multiple linear regression analysis
  - DV: Loneliness
  - IV: Figure 2 (blue boxes)

## Results

Table 1. Descriptives characteristics.

	N	%
International student	75	15.6
Paid (student) job	296	61.5
Volunteer job	110	22.9
Student association	130	27.0
Member of sportsclub	101	21.0
Living situation		
With parents	135	28.1
With peers	161	33.5
With partner	54	11.2
Alone	124	25.8
Other	7	1.5
Year of study		
1st year BA	77	16.0
2nd year BA	60	12.5
3rd year BA	98	20.4
4th year BA	81	16.8
Premaster	8	1.7
Master	142	29.5
PhD	8	1.7
Other	13	2.7

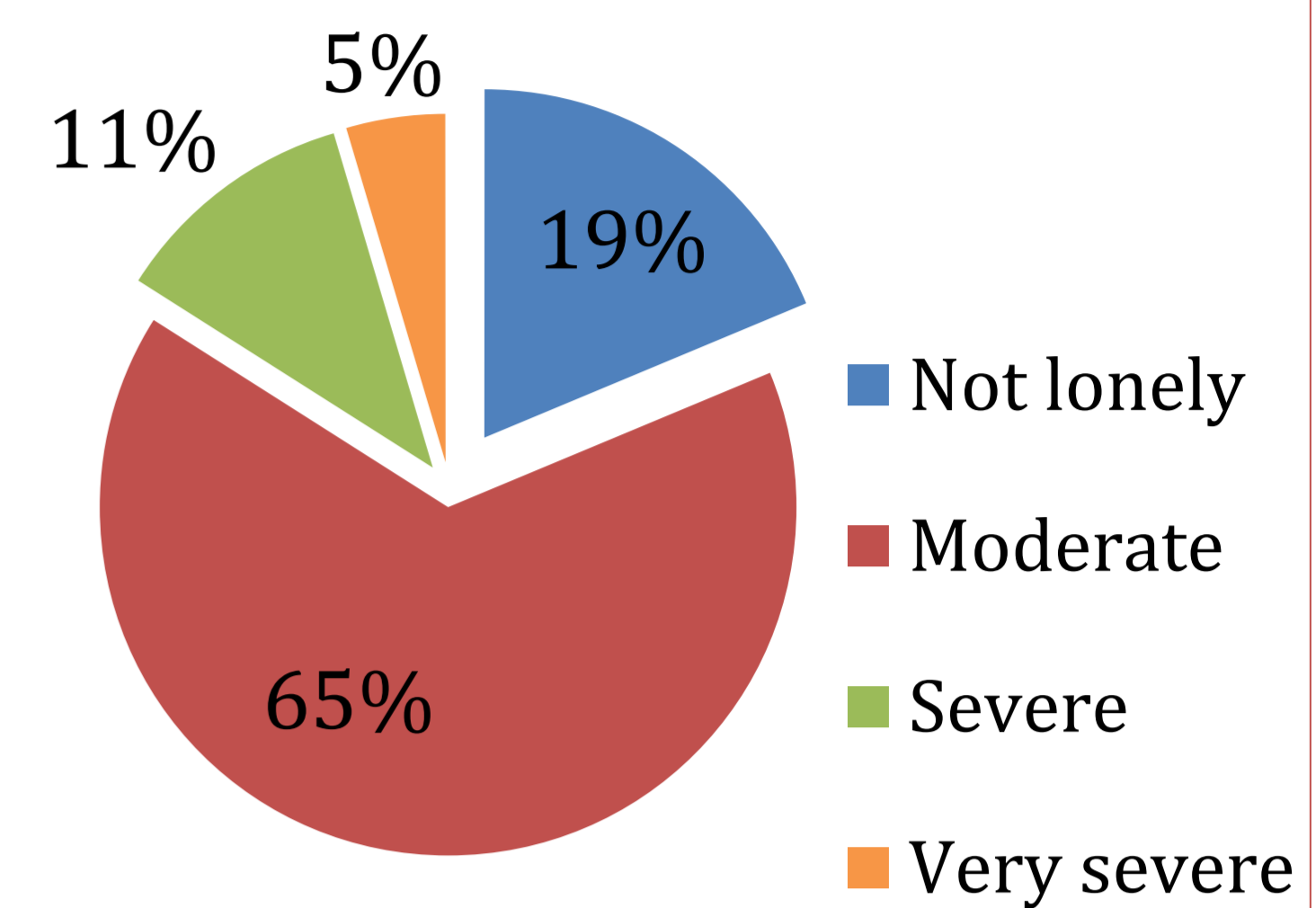
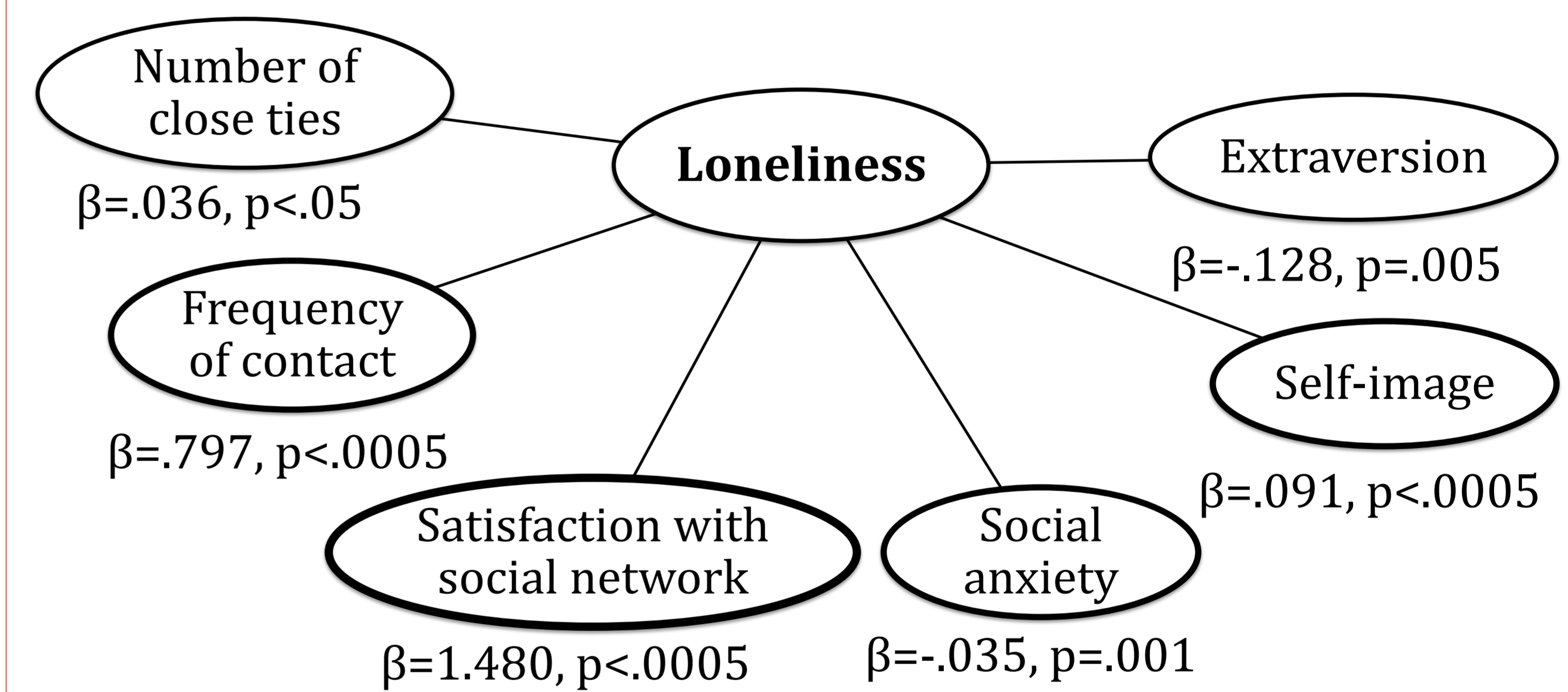


Figure 3. Prevalence of loneliness among Dutch university students.



Independent variables	Coefficient β	P value
Age	.010	.762
Gender	.147	.504
Depression (K-6)	.005	.766

$R^2 = .463$ ,  $F(9,469)=44.842$ ,  $p<0.0005$

Figure 4. Outcome of multiple regression analysis.

## Discussion

- ❖ First study to include multiple factors contributing to loneliness to gain a better understanding of the underlying mechanisms of loneliness in a student population.
- ❖ Previous studies examined associations between loneliness and gender, culture, self-esteem, academic performance, mental health, attachment, and social media<sup>3</sup> among students.
- ❖ The results of this study shows that besides the objective measure of one's social network, social anxiety and subjective evaluation of social network are important factors.
- ❖ Finally, depression does not play a significant role in loneliness among university students.

❖ Further research should investigate the role between subjective evaluation (satisfaction with social network), mental health (soc. anx.), and loneliness.

References: (1) Matthews et al. (2016); (2) Victor & Yang (2012); (3) Diehl et al. (2018) Contact: [n.e.wolters@uva.nl](mailto:n.e.wolters@uva.nl)