



Research Paper

## The Psychological Variations of Loneliness In Youngsters

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### ABSTRACT

**INTRODUCTION:** Loneliness is an unpleasant emotional response to perceived isolation. It causes people who are lonely often crave human contact, but their state of mind makes it more difficult to form connection with other people. **AIM:** Aim of the study was to explore the psychological variations of Loneliness in youngsters. **METHODS:** A questionnaire survey was conducted with the help of Google form among youngsters willing to answer all the questions. The proposed study was conducted to assess the factors or we can say causes of Loneliness in youngsters by using UCLA loneliness questionnaire (version 3). **RESULT:** A total of 100 youngsters participated in the survey; data of the youngsters were included in the survey. Data shows that the 66% of the youngsters were scored high which reflects greater feelings of Loneliness. When we compare between boys and girls 76% of boys scored high score whereas 60% girls scored high score. This shows boys were more lonelier than girls. **CONCLUSION:** There are many psychological variations of Loneliness in youngsters such as interpersonal rejection, sexual abuse, internet addiction, peer relationship, etc. To overcome with loneliness cognitive behavioral therapy is the most effective therapy which should be given to the youngsters.

**KEYWORDS:** loneliness, psychological variations, youngsters, UCLA, cognitive behavioral therapy.

Received 08 December, 2020; Accepted 24 December, 2020 © The author(s) 2020.

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Loneliness is totally different from solitary. Solitary doesn't accompany with negative emotions such as fear and sadness while loneliness do. One can feel lonely when distress and one can enjoy work things alone without feeling lonely. So, when one is accompanied with negative emotions, it is possible for one to feel lonely. The negative emotions are usually associated with fear, anxiety, depression, guilt and etc. Also, loneliness can also make a person thinks negatively which normally links to depression. Sometimes, to an extreme extend, loneliness can cause one to suicide or self-injured. Loneliness is the condition when a person is not surrounded by other people, spends most of his or her time alone, and maintains little-to-no social contact. However, anyone who had at least once experienced the condition of loneliness knows that it is possible to be surrounded by friends or family, stay in the thick of things, and still feel isolated. In fact, the statistics shows about 60% of people who feel lonely are married, which is a good illustration of the thesis that loneliness does not depend on the environment, that the amount and variety of social connections and/or relationships do not necessarily save us from it. In line with the attachment-cognitive approach loneliness is a result of an individual's feeling a lack of strong, intimate bonds with significant others (Bowlby 1973; Weiss 1973). Loneliness may be conceptualized as a multifaceted and domain-specific phenomenon. Weiss (1973) was the first to describe loneliness as a multidimensional experience and proposed a distinction between social loneliness as a result of an inadequate access to social relationships such as a network of peers, co-workers, neighbors, or friends, and emotional loneliness perceived as a lack of close or intimate relationships which are characteristic of ties with a romantic partner, parent, or child. Emotional loneliness is primarily related to "the absence of a partner, that is, with the absence of an exclusive, close, and intimate tie" (Dykstra and Fokkema 2007, p. 9). I turn; social loneliness is related to a perceived deficiency in social networks, or a lack of social relations or social activities (Russell et al. 1984; Weiss 1973). Furthermore, on the basis of Weiss (1973) distinction between the experience of social isolation (social loneliness) and emotional isolation (emotional loneliness), DiTommaso and Spinner (1993, 1997) noted that emotional loneliness appeared to be comprised of two domains, that is, family emotional loneliness and romantic emotional loneliness.

## **I. CAUSES OF LONELINESS**

First reason for adolescent to get lonely is moving out to a new environment such as a new country or school. This usually applies to fresh students who have just transfer to a new college or university. Especially if they live far outside from their home, they are likely to miss their family and their loved one. Thus, it causes them to feel lonely. However, this usually lasts temporarily until we become closely adjusted to the environment and makes new friends.

Second reason is to get caught in lovesick because of falling out in love for the first time or had a broken intimate relationship. It is one of the detrimental problems to adolescent. Lovesick victims, they often think breaking up with someone you love is just like losing him or her by your side and losing someone special from your life. This feeling often similar to the death of someone you love. This gives the feeling of torment, painful and powerful enough to turn a lovesick person to a lonely person.

Third reason is sexual abuse. When one is sexually abused during adolescent, whether is going to lead to emotionally or physically traumatized, he or she can feel desperate and lonely, doesn't know who to talk to but to suffer every time when thinking about it. This may slowly make the victim avoid talking to others. Since sexually abuse is rather a shame topic, it is unlikely the victim would want to bring up and talk about it even to a closest friend or family member.

Fourth reason is interpersonal rejection such as relationship rejection, friendship rejection and playmate rejection. Sometimes, when a person often got rejected, it is possible that one will expect a negative expectation on the successful of attracting and forming an interpersonal relationship with others. They become depress and pessimist. Slowly, they feel lonely because they believe no one would accept them. They are likely to feel lack of caring and love.

Fifth reason is feeling of having poor body image; Especially girls who looks fat, overweight, lot of pimples on their faces are likely to feel their body are negative than males. They may loss confident on their attraction on others and are likely to shutdown themselves. They are afraid of being rejected by others or hate the way they look. Unlike guys, girls tend care a lot of their self-image especially body image.

As people who believe that good quality, supportive relationships have a significant positive impact on our health (both mental and physical), we are pleased there has been a recent increase in both scientific and general public interest in loneliness. It is important to note loneliness, in this context, is not synonymous with solitude, or a person choosing to be alone. We refer instead to a persistent mismatch between the level of social connectedness a person has, and what they would like. It is a subjective state (i.e. relies on a person's own appraisal of their quality and quantity of relationships). We know it is associated with numerous physical health problems, and it is also linked with e.g. depression (Wang et al, 2018), dementia (Holwerda et al 2014), suicidal ideation (Stickley et al 2016) and an overall increased risk of dying earlier (Holt-Lunstad et al, 2015).

Shyness is defined as a general tendency of withdrawing and feeling awkward in social situations (Cheek & Buss, 1981).shyness may result in lower levels of an individual's motivation to initiate social activity and lead to isolation. In addition, people with shyness are inclined to evaluate themselves and others in a negative way, which hinders them participating in social activities and precipitates loneliness. Aggression is a kind of human behavior that may serve as a protective factor in some dangerous situations, whereas may play a detrimental role in other situations (e.g. social conditions). Evidence has shown that people with intensive loneliness were more likely accompanied with temper tantrums and behaving in an aggressive manner. The impairment of peer relationships brought on by aggression precludes the development of social relationship and increases the risk of getting lonely. Additionally, loneliness can cut off the normal way for young people to learn and develop adaptive social skills which further leads to more loneliness. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that aggression could become a rational precursor of loneliness in the young adulthood. Both shyness and aggression can increase the chance of exposure in severe loneliness.

### **Mobile game addiction and loneliness:**

Loneliness is defined as an unpleasant experience that derives from important deficiencies in a person's network of social relationships. Loneliness is not only the cause of online gaming addiction but also the consequence; there is a possible reciprocal relationship. Playing online games may temporarily provide an escape from the negative feelings associated with social deficiencies; excessive gaming does little to facilitate the development or maintenance of real-life relationships. Instead, the substitution for interpersonal interactions in real life may exacerbate the deterioration of existing social relationships, thereby increasing loneliness.

### **Effects of loneliness**

The first effect of loneliness is shut down. Most of the time, we can get shut down when we are caught in a lovesick, broken heart or rejection. Because we are so afraid to experience those emotional fallouts again, we tend to shut down. Girls are more likely to shut down when they got seriously rejected or reject a guy because of the hurt that the guy has caused making the girls to lose all the trust and acceptance. We can

sometimes feel lonely and want to establish a new relationship but at the same time feeling afraid to love because of the possibility of emotional falling.

The second effect of loneliness is depression and suicide. It is dangerous when adolescences experience loneliness with completely sense of hopelessness, results in despair and can sometimes lead to suicide. When we feel really lonely, we can feel really depress; lost the ways to solve their problems cause us to feel worthless. Since lonely, depress persons are likely to think negatively, they tend to feel selfish for not thinking of others who cares for them. This kind of situation can be very likely to give us an unconsciously feeling or thought for an attempt to suicide.

The third effect of loneliness is self-injured. Sometimes, lonely people with full hopelessness choose self-injured as an alternative to suicide. Because they are afraid to die, they choose to hurt themselves in such way that sometimes for just a purpose to draw attention from others to care for them so that they can avoid being lonely. Sometimes, they do it to control or release their emotions such as self-punishing for being guilty. For some reasons, most victims are female.

The fourth effect of loneliness is the use of alcohol and other forms of drug abuse. Sometimes, lonely adolescents sometime choose drugs as a way to express their negative emotions such as regret and sadness. Lonely adolescents with depression, they usually blame themselves for being useless or sometime guilty or regret for things they have done.

### **Social Support and Loneliness**

Social support refers to the material and spiritual care, help, and support from others during difficult times or emergencies. Social support is generally believed to be divided into two dimensions according to its nature. One is objective support (OS), which refers to objective, visible, or practical support. Such support is independent of individual feelings and is an objective fact. For example, living with family, classmates, colleagues, or friends. The other is subjective support (SS), which refers to the subjective and experiential emotional support of individuals. Loneliness is a subjective psychological feeling or experience that occurs when an individual senses a lack of satisfactory interpersonal relationships and a gap between his or her desired and actual levels of communication. Peplau and Perlman (1979) believed that loneliness is an unhappy experience related to an individual's lack of social networks, including a lack of quantity and quality of social relations. Some researchers have demonstrated that social skills and coping methods for negative emotional events as well as social support, especially from core family members, rather than demographic variables such as sex, age, marriage, occupation, educational level, family, economic conditions, and socioeconomic status, substantively influence loneliness.

### **Social Support and Internet Addiction:**

Traditional friendships based on face-to-face communication are generally believed to provide social support, social identity, and a sense of belonging. Some researchers have shown that when social resources are relatively scarce, some individuals choose the Internet as a medium through which to meet their needs and gain social support, especially when they are required to reestablish social networks and communication with others because of environmental changes. Many researchers have reported that people often play different roles in online games, which enables teenagers to obtain social support unavailable in real life and meet various emotional needs. However, some researchers believe that relationships formed on such networks are shallow, illusory, and sometimes risky and hostile.

### **Methods:**

The sample was comprised of 100 participants in which 50 were boys and 50 were girls young adults of aged between 18-25 years. We used purposive sampling method in this research. This questionnaire was designed to obtain general descriptive information about participants' background such as their age, gender, field of study, current relationship status. After that UCLA Loneliness Scale (Version 3) was given to the respondents. And scoring of the given responses was to done according to the respective manual.

## **II. MEASURE:**

### **UCLA Loneliness Questionnaire:**

Developed by psychologist Daniel Russell (1996), the UCLA Loneliness Scale (Version 3) is a 20-item measure that assesses how often a person feels disconnected from others. This questionnaire assessed the extent of loneliness individuals experienced when there is discrepancy between actual and perceived expectations of his or her interpersonal relationships (e.g. Do you often feel being left out?). It's a 20 item scale with each item accompanied with a 4-point score ranging from 1 (never) to 4 (all the time). Sum score of the 20 items was calculated to indicate overall loneliness. Higher scores reflect greater feelings of loneliness.

Data Analysis – The obtained data was subjected to statistical analysis pertinent to research objectives. The data was analysis by appropriate statistical method i.e.; Mean, SD, t-test.

**III. RESULT:**

Central tendencies and variability of the scores of psychological variations of loneliness in youngsters.

	N	Mean	SD	SE	SED	T- Ratio	DF	P Value
<b>Boys</b>	50	53.6	9.74	1.37	1.87	2.03	98	0.05
<b>Girls</b>	50	49.8	9.08	1.28				

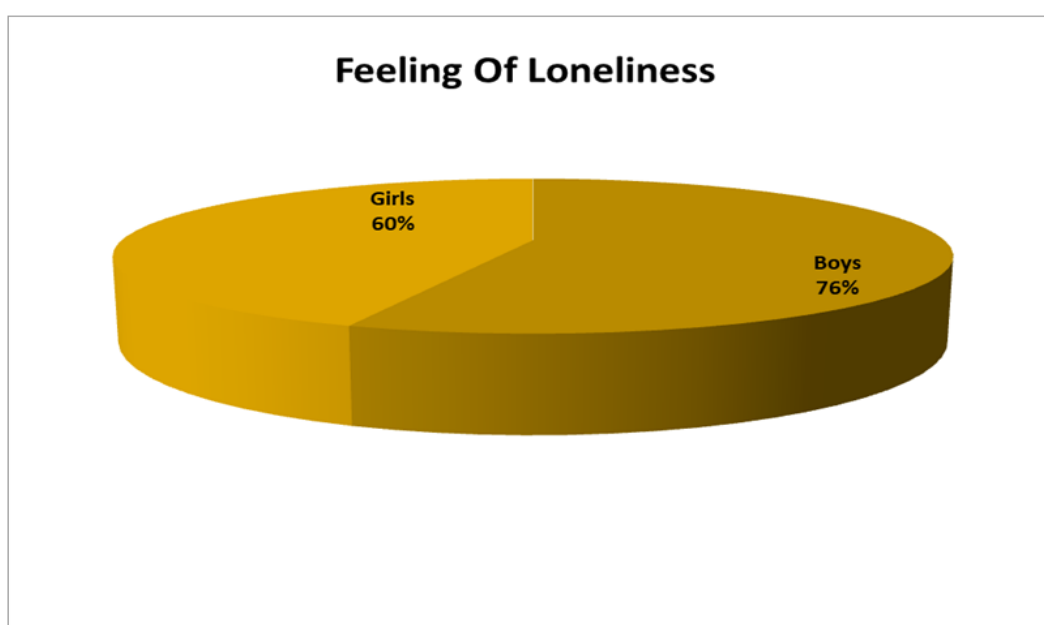


Table – 1

This table shows that the obtained mean value of boys and girls were 53.06 and 49.08 respectively which shows that the obtained mean value differs from each other. It means that boys were more lonelier than girls.

The obtained SD value of boys and girls were 9.74 and 9.08 respectively which was lesser than its mean value and showed better internal constancy.

The obtained t-ratio 2.03 is significant at 0.05 levels, it can be said that it was marginally significant and on this basis the difference between two variables were significant by chance.

**IV. DISCUSSION:**

The present study showed that, in comparison to individuals in nonmarital romantic relationships, single persons experience loneliness in specific domains (i.e., in the domain of romantic partners and family), but not in other domains (i.e., in the domain of social relationships). Similarly, in regard to perceived social support the present study indicated that single individuals have a lower perception of selected sources of social support (i.e., family and significant others support),but, at the same time, they may have similar subjectively perceived support from friends as individuals in relationships. These findings contradict the perception of singles as completely lonely and having no friends (Greitemeyer 2009; DePaulo and Morris 2005). Social support and social connectedness are well-known predictors of health and mortality. In recent years, loneliness has emerged as an important factor that could explain this relationship. This study shows that loneliness is most strongly associated with a lack of close relationships (but unrelated to sheer contact with the social network) and that loneliness mediates the relationship between social support and health. There is also strong evidence that loneliness is associated with poor health because lonely people do not or cannot enact key health behaviors (i.e., sleep, medical adherence, and exercise) that enhance the body’ s natural recuperative mechanisms or have a

preventative effect on illness. There is compelling evidence that social support from other people and connectedness with them has a powerful impact on health outcomes and even mortality (e.g., Ell et al., 1992; House, Landis, & Umberson, 1988). However, it is often the case that such findings do not specifically explain how or why social support and health are positively associated. Although the causal factors in this relationship are surely manifold, we predicted that social support is associated with better health in part because it is effective at preventing loneliness which itself can contribute to poor health. Loneliness is bad for our physical and mental health. Children who are aggressive report the greatest degrees of loneliness and social dissatisfaction (Asher, Parkhurst, Hymel, & Williams, 1990).

Children who are neglected or withdrawn also report feelings of loneliness, because these children often lack social skills, they have difficulty interacting with their peers. These children may also be extremely shy, inhibited, and anxious, and they may lack self-confidence (Rubin, LeMare, & Lollis, 1990).

This study also acknowledge that boys were more lonelier than girls it may because boys don't express their emotions to others, they repress their emotions and by doing this for many times they become aggressive and frustrated which makes them lonely. Basically when boys were alone they usually spend their time by playing games on phone or watching video. Nowadays games like PUBG free fire has negatively influence the thought and behavior of many boys.

While girls are more likely to have dense social networks than boys. From childhood, girls are socialized to value friendship, confide in their friends and to foster deep intimacy with close friends. Even when boys have many friends, they may feel uncomfortable in sharing emotions or airing feelings of vulnerability.

## V. CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, whether the relationship between social support and Internet addiction is positive or negative as well as whether other variables (e.g., loneliness) exist between them is unclear. Dividing social support and Internet addiction into several dimensions as previously described helps to clarify the relationships between them. Therefore, determining the causation between the three dimensions of social support and the four dimensions of Internet addiction is necessary to understand the mechanism of Internet addiction. At some ages and positions in life, kin relationships appear to be a less important aspect of the loneliness equation than friendships or other factors. Parents not only protect their children from being lonely but also they contribute to it. If siblings are close, they tend to be less lonely. Throughout adulthood, unsatisfying marriages and the endings of intimate relationships are associated with greater loneliness. Thus, it is not simply relationships but what happens in them that count. There is also strong evidence that loneliness is associated with poor health because lonely people do not or cannot enact key health behaviors (i.e., sleep, medical adherence, and exercise) that enhance the body's natural recuperative mechanisms or have a preventative effect on illness. There are many psychological variations of Loneliness in youngsters such as interpersonal rejection, sexual abuse, internet addiction, peer relationship, etc. To overcome with loneliness cognitive behavioral therapy is the most effective therapy which should be given to the youngsters.

Conflict of Interest: All the authors clarified that there is no conflicts of interest.

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