

Loneliness and Family Relationship among Adolescents: Correlational Study

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Abstract

Objectives: This study was carried out with the objectives of investigating the relationship between Family relationship and loneliness in adolescents. Accepted children will score less on loneliness. Neglected children will score high on loneliness. Concentrated children score less on loneliness as compare to accepted children.

Method: Sample consisted of 150 adolescent selected by purposive sampling technique. The scales employed for data collection were Family Relationship Inventory by Sherry and Sinha and UCLA loneliness (III) Scale by Russell. Hypothesized that accepted children will score less on loneliness as compare to concentrated and neglected.

Results: 150 subjects were taken & after scoring those high on accepted, concentrated and neglected were selected to form three groups.

Conclusion: Findings indicate that the fundamental cause of loneliness is disconnection. Family support and close relationships with their adult children play a central role in adjusting to a new life and in preventing and/or lessening

Keywords: adolescence; family relationship; loneliness; gender

Introduction

Loneliness may be understood in terms of one's connectedness to others, or specifically it is the unpleasant experience of the individual which happen when the person social relationship may be observed a lack of interaction with others (Pittman 2016). Studies has been proved that loneliness is predominant throughout the society i.e. in relationships, marriages, families, experienced person, and those with fruitful professions (Peplau, 1982). Loneliness is may be explain as social pain because it motivates the individual to do so (Cacioppo, 2008). Loneliness may be one of the possible factor which represent a dysfunction of communication, and it is also a leading factors where the comparatively less people to communicate with others. Loneliness may represent as a social phenomenon too; it has the capability of scattering like a virus. It can start with one person and other may start feeling the same like the previous and thus this feeling can spread to others and increases everybody's risk for feelings of loneliness (Parker & Pope, 2009). Loneliness has been linked with other impaired cellular immunity as reflected in lower natural killer (NK) cell activity and higher antibody titers to the Epstein Barr Virus and human herpes viruses. Loneliness has been linked with depression, and is thus a risk factor for suicide (Marano & Hara, 2003). Durkheim has described loneliness, specifically the inability or unwillingness to live for others, i.e. for friendships or altruistic ideas, as the main reason for what he called egoistic suicide

(Shelkova&Polina, 2010). In adults, loneliness is a major precipitant of depression and alcoholism (Marano & Hara, 2012). People who are socially isolated may report poor sleep quality, and thus have diminished restorative processes. Loneliness has also been linked with a Schizoid character type in which one may see the world differently and experience social alienation, described as the self in exile (Hawkey & Louise, 2003).

Children go through different stages in life; so parents create their own parenting styles from a combination of factors that evolve over time as children begin to develop their own personalities. During the stage of infancy, parents try to adjust to a new lifestyle in terms of adapting and bonding with their new infant. For example, the relationship between the parent and child is attachment. In the stage of adolescence, parents encounter new challenges, such as adolescents seeking and desiring for freedom. A child's temperament and parents' cultural patterns have an influence on the kind of parenting style a child may receive. Additional developmental skills result from positive parenting styles including: maintaining a close relationship with others, being self-reliant, and independence. During the mid1980s, researchers began to explore how specific parenting styles influence a child's later development. Diana Baumrind is a researcher who focused on the classification of parenting styles. Baumrind's research is known as "Baumrind's Parenting Typology". In her research, she found what she considered to be the four

basic elements that could help shape successful parenting. Through her studies Baumrind identified three initial parenting styles: Authoritative parenting, authoritarian parenting and permissive parenting.

Rationale of the Study

In the present circumstances youth as well as children are facing difficulties in life. These difficulties are giving rise to many psychosomatic problems such as anxiety, tensions, frustrations and emotional upsets in day to day life. They may also find it harder to entertain themselves when they are alone. Not all children who spend a lot of time alone are lonely. And children who are around other kinds can feel lonely too. Therefore, it is necessary to prevent loneliness. Since parents are the first, foremost and constant/continuous contacts none other can play a better role than parents in taking care of children and adolescents. Therefore, it seems worthwhile to study the relationship of parenting style with loneliness.

Problem: To study the role of family relationship on loneliness among adolescents.

Objectives

1. To study the relationship of acceptance (parenting) children with loneliness.
2. To study the relationship of concentration (parenting) children with loneliness.
3. To study the relationship of avoidance (parenting) with loneliness.

Hypotheses

1. Higher the acceptance of child lower would be the loneliness.
2. Higher the concentration of child higher would be the loneliness.
3. Higher the avoidance of child higher would be the loneliness.

Method

Design

The correlational design was used to study the data.

Sample:

Sample consisted of 150 age range (16-20) adolescents to participate. An equal number of male and female were selected from the schools and different educational institutes. A three group design with acceptance, concentration and avoidance children was employed. The selection of group was based on the score of the subjects on the family relationship scales by Sherry and Sinha. These students were now given UCLA loneliness scale by Russell.

Tools

Family Relationship Inventory: (FRI-ss) developed by Sherry and Sinha (1987) was used as a measure of three types of parental attitudes- acceptance, concentration and avoidance in a family. This inventory is specifically used to discriminate individuals who feel emotionally accepted, over protected or rejected by their parents. The inventory contains total 150 items classified into three patterns of father and mother separately.

UCLA Loneliness Scale (version III): This scale was prepared by Russell (1996). The UCLA Loneliness scale measures loneliness by asking direct questions about experience associated with loneliness. The participants respond to the statements using a four point scale (4= often, 3=sometime, 2=rarely, 1= never). The scale itself is one of the most widely used loneliness measure and has reputable reliability and validity with university students, the standardized item alpha is .92. The single item that measured loneliness by directly asking participants if they were lonely had a corrected item total correlation of .77 with the rest of the scale and raised the internal consistency of the final measure to .93 and the test-retest reliability is .73 ($r=.73$) The result fluctuated between 10 (the lowest level of loneliness) and the 40 (the highest level of loneliness).

Results and Discussion

The present research was carried out of the correlation between family relationship and loneliness. There are three sub-dimensions of family relationship i.e. Acceptance, concentration and avoided. 150 adolescents were selected on the basis of availability from Rohtak city.

Variable	Loneliness	Acceptance	Concentration	Avoided
Loneliness	-----	-.42**	.09	.16*
Acceptance		-----	.26*	.05
Concentration			-----	.02
Avoided				-----
Mean	25.47	48.96	50.45	50.48
SD	7.52	6.12	3.26	5.58

Table-1 Showing Descriptive statistics and correlation coefficient

From the above table it can be said that the mean value of loneliness is 25.47. According to the norm value the score more than 20 lies in the category of high loneliness. So it is clearly have been shown from the above table that the mean value of loneliness belong to the high category. The mean value of acceptance is 48.96, concentration is 50.45 and avoided is 50.48.

The table also representing that the value of correlation between acceptance and loneliness -.42 which is significant at 0.01 levels. Therefore it can be said that higher the acceptance of the child by their parents lower was the loneliness among children. The results are showing that the accepted children were found to be less lonely. The first hypothesis which indicated that higher the acceptance of child lower would be the loneliness has been proved. The acceptances of parents their care and affection make the children feel less lonely. The children of

accepted parents have a faith for the parents that they will present themselves and be available for them whenever the child needs them. It is because of the feeling of support and care from the parents they receive. Rohner and Britner (2002), found in their study that the adolescents of accepted parents are found to have strongly adjustments.

Further the table-1 showing that correlation of loneliness and concentration is .09 which is not significant. This shows that the concentrated children found to be lonely. The second hypothesis higher the concentration of child higher would be the loneliness has been proved. It may be happen just because of the extra care and pampering by the parents make the child more dependent on them. Child needs some specific space and time in adolescent period with their peer group, concentrated parents don't allow them to mingle with the peer groups and

it becomes hard to the adolescents to make friends so they feel isolated and lonely of not having friends.

Table-1 further shows that the correlation value of avoided parent's children with loneliness is .16. The level of significance is .05. The results are clearly indicating that the avoided children feel more loneliness. The third hypothesis higher the avoidance of child higher would be the loneliness has been proved. They are children who are found to be more alone and isolated. The child who are rejected by parents or peers has been associated with emotional and behavioral maladjustment such as depression, aggression, and suicidal behaviours (Fotti et al. 2006; Loeber & Stouthamerloeber 1986; Parker & Asher 1987). The theoretical implication of internal working models in the attachment theory of Bowlby is that ongoing parental rejection makes the child hesitant, aggressive, and hostile toward others because of the chance of rejection. It also causes the child to feel unworthy of love, resulting in impaired self-esteem, depressive feelings, a negative world view, and so on (Rohner, 2004).

Socially withdrawn children frequently refrain from social activities in the presence of peers. The lack of social interaction in childhood may result from a variety of causes, including social fear and anxiety or a preference for solitude. From early childhood through to adolescence, socially withdrawn children are concurrently and predictively at risk for a wide range of negative adjustment outcomes, including socio-emotional difficulties (e.g., anxiety, low self-esteem, depressive symptoms, and internalizing problems), peer difficulties (e.g., rejection, victimization, poor friendship quality), and school difficulties (e.g., poor-quality teacher-child relationships, academic difficulties, school avoidance (Rubin et al. 2009).

One of the most important human needs in life is the need to belong. Due to the rapidly changing social environment in adolescence, the need to belong is not truly satisfied yet important to fulfill (Patrick et al. 2007). Research indicates that perceived social isolation (i.e., loneliness) is a risk factor for, and may contribute to, poorer overall cognitive performance, faster cognitive decline, poorer executive functioning, more negativity and depressive cognition, heightened sensitivity to social threats, a confirmatory bias in social cognition that is self-protective and paradoxically self-defeating, heightened anthropomorphism, and contagion that threatens social cohesion. These differences in attention and cognition impact emotions, decisions, behaviors, and interpersonal interactions that may contribute to the association between loneliness and cognitive decline and between loneliness and morbidity more generally.

Therefore, it is recommended to train the parents on acceptance style of rearing their children so that they do not grow lonely. Acceptance means that the parents consider children as an independent and responsible member of the family.

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