A STUDY ON LONELINESS AMONG HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN UDHAMPUR DISTRICT

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Loneliness is the state of distress or discomfort that results when one perceives a gap between one's desires for social connection and actual experiences of it. Even some people who are surrounded by others throughout the day—or are in a long-lasting marriage—still experience a deep and pervasive loneliness. If a person does not wish to improve one's social relationships, then the person may not be considered to be experiencing loneliness. Loneliness influences thoughts, feelings, and behaviors; and consequences of loneliness for health and wellbeing. According to APA Dictionary of Psychology, Loneliness means cognitively or emotionally discomfort of perceiving oneself to feel alone or solitary. However, different subfields of psychology can explain it differently. Social psychology explains loneliness is a kind of emotional distress when social relationship becomes a problem while Cognitive psychology says it is an emotional distress when an individual wants and actual social relationship isn't met.

Loneliness is rather a subjective feeling. Different persons can experience level and duration of loneliness differently. This applies to adolescent as well. Not all the persons face the same situation will result in experiencing loneliness in the same condition. One can feel, think and face the problems that lead to loneliness differently.

Loneliness is an emotional and cognitive reaction to having fewer and less satisfying relationships than one desires (Archibald et al., 1995; Peplau & Perlman, 1982). Loneliness can be described as the inability to sustain the level of a relationship on aspires. It's more than a feeling of desiring company or association to do something with another individual. It is a feeling of being detached, alienated, and disconnected from other individuals. It is very difficult for a lonely individual to have some quality human relations. They generally feel a sense of inner emptiness and isolation from the surroundings. In the current psychological literature loneliness is a significant personality factor. Loneliness is the incompetence to discover meaning in one's life. Becker (1962) stated that the most challenging realization for man is the possibility that life has no meaning. as societies become more advanced and prosperous, the quantity and strength of loneliness tend to enhance proportionally. Loneliness can be defined as an individual's subjective experience, that he has deficiencies of close inter-personal connections. While dealing with loneliness remember that it is a subjective perception, depicting what we experience and think about our interpersonal life and it is not to be taken as being alone or solitude. One can spend a lot of time alone deprived of experiencing lonely and one can also experience loneliness in a crowd. The partners in a long marriage can feel lonely, whereas a just widowed person may not experience loneliness (Tomstam, 1992).

An individual may suffer from emotional loneliness or social loneliness. In emotional loneliness, individual experiences that there is a deficiency of concerned close associations. To be brief, a feeling of absolute aloneness pervades one's being, either making the world seem empty or initiating him to view himself as possessing these features. While social loneliness is triggered by the lack of societal engagements and can be cured by re involving the individual in such engagements. The type and degree of social engagements each individual requires to revive from loneliness will differ from individual to individual.

Objectives of the study

1. To find out significant difference in the loneliness among secondary school students belonging to different gender (boys and girls).
2. To find out significant difference in the loneliness among secondary school students belonging to different locality (rural and urban).

3.   To find the interactional effect of gender (boys and girls) and locality (rural and urban) among secondary school students when loneliness scores are taken as dependent variable.

Hypotheses of the study

1.   There are no significant differences in loneliness among secondary school students belonging to different gender (boys and girls).
2.   There is no significant difference in the loneliness among secondary school students belonging to different locality (rural and urban).
3.   There is no significant difference in the interactional effect of gender (boys and girls) and locality (rural and urban) among secondary school students when loneliness scores are taken as dependent variable.

Delimitations of the study

1.   The study was confined to Udhamour district only.
2.   The study is confined to 200 higher secondary school students of government and private schools.

Selection of the sample

In the present study the sample was randomly selected. For this purpose the investigator made a complete list of schools of Udhampur district. Each school was allotted a serial number and by lottery method 10 schools were selected for the data collection. The sample was drawn from high school students studying in the selected schools of Udhampur district. A sample of 200 students was taken which included 100 boys and 100 girls. The number of students (girls and boys) selected from different private and government schools.

Variables to be studied

In the present study there are two independent variables and one dependent variable which are to be studied.

(a) Independent Variables

       i)   Gender: Boys and Girls

       ii) Locality: Rural and Urban

(b) Dependent Variable

       i) Loneliness Scale Scores.

Tool used

The investigator employed following tools for the data collection. To carry out any type of research, investigation data must be gathered to test the hypothesis. To study Loneliness scale in the sample, the investigator used the **Loneliness Scale** constructed and standardized by **Adnam Hamid and Dr.Mohammad Parvez.** There are 34 items in the test and each item is to responded by the students either Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often and Always. The students have tick (√) the statement which seems to be right either it.

Scoring of the tool

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Positive	5	4	3	2	1
Negative	1	2	3	4	5

● Indicate Negative Items

Type of Items	Serial Number of items	Total
Positive	1,2,4,6,8,9,12,14,17,19,22,24,28, 30	14
Negative	3,5,7,10,11,13,15,16,18,20,21,23, 25,26, 27,29, 31,32,33,34	20
Total		34

Reliability and validity of the tool

Reliability of the tool

To find the coefficient of reliability Cronbach's Alpha and split half method were used by the constructor.
Reliability coefficient of the scale.

Sr.No.	Method	Reliability	Significanceat
I.	Cronbach's Alpha	.87	01level
II.	Split half	.83	.01level

Validity of the tool

In item analysis validity, coefficients were determined for each dimension by applying Pearson product moment correlation method. All were found to be significant at .01 level. It confirms the construct validity of the scale, which indicates that all the dimensions are related to the loneliness. Here the correlation of each dimensions with the total score confirms that each dimension is measuring the same characteristics individually that the scale as a whole measure i.e. loneliness, which predicts that the scale has good construct validity.

Correlation Coefficients

	SR	IR	DR	SI	EMP	Total
SR	1	.618**	.499**	.519**	.577**	.813**
IR		1	.527**	.509**	.594**	.834**
DR			1	.521**	.556**	.757**
SI				1	.554**	.762**
EMP					1	.824**
Total						1

**Correlation is significant at 0.01 level

Statistical techniques to be used

Two Ways ANOVA (2x2) was applied by the investigator to see the effect of main factor gender and locality on the loneliness among higher secondary school students of Udhampur.

Analysis and interpretation of data

Sourceof variance	SS	Df	MS	F	Levelof Significance
A(Gender)	6.4	1	6.4	0.004	Not significant
B(Locality)	122.5	1	122.5	0.007	Not significant
AxB(Genderx Locality)	656.1	1	656.1	0.42	Not significant
Within	55919	36	1553.30		

The F-ratio for the factor A (Gender i.e. boys and girls) came out to be 0.004 and the table values for the significance are 4.11and 7.42 at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance against df 1 and 36. So the calculated value is not significant. It means that there is no difference in the loneliness among higher secondary school students belonging to different gender (boys and girls). Hence hypothesis 1 stating that there will be no significant difference in loneliness among higher secondary school students belonging to different gender (boys and girls) is accepted.

The F- ratio for the factor B 'Locality' (Rural and Urban) came outtobe0.007and the table values for the significance are 4.11 and 7.39 at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance against df 1 and 36. It means that there is no significance difference in the loneliness among higher secondary school students belonging to different locality i.e. rural and urban. Hence, second hypothesis stating that "there will be no significant difference in the loneliness among secondary school students belonging to different locality (rural and urban)"is accepted. The F-ratio for interaction (A X B) has been found to be 0.42 less than the value 4.11 and 7.39 against degree of freedom 1 and 36 level of significance. It indicates that under joint influence there is no difference in the significant difference in the loneliness among secondary school students belonging to different gender and locality. Hence, third hypothesis stating that

"there will be no significant difference in the interactional effect of gender (boys and girls) and locality (rural and urban) among secondary school students when loneliness scores are taken as dependent variable" is accepted.

Educational implications

Schools should apply various approaches to diminish the loneliness level of students. Thus, it is the responsibility of family and schools to provide proper attention and a conducive environment to students for their well-being and ultimately to raise their academic performance. Parent and teacher should supervise their relations with relatives, friends, and classmates and try to promote healthy relations among them. Students should get proper chances to express their inner feelings. Counselling centers should be placed in all secondary schools to assist needy students so that they can be prevented from loneliness and cured if suffering from loneliness.

Suggestions for further study

1. The present study cannot be called comprehensive and final more work can be done on different sample of different areas.
2. The present study deals with secondary school students, same type of work can be done on higher and college students and thus comparison can be made.
3. A sample of 200 students was taken in the study under investigation. Same study can be done on a large sample with more variables.
4. This study can be undertaken in other districts since it was confined to Udhampur district.

Conclusions

There is no significant difference in loneliness among secondary school students belonging to different gender (boys and girls).
There is no significant difference in the loneliness among secondary school students belonging to different locality (rural and urban).
There is no significant difference in the interactional effect of gender among Secondary school students when loneliness scores are taken as dependent variable.

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