

Loneliness and Gender- A Comparative Study among High School, College and University Students

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Abstract- Loneliness has been defined as an unpleasant experience that derives from important deficiencies in the lonely person's network of social relationship. It is increasingly becoming a major concern in modern societies. A total of 3839 students were participated, out of them 2007 are male and 1832 are female students studying in High school to the University. The relation between loneliness and gender with reference to level of the education are examined. Chi-square test, T-test and ANOVA tests are carried out to explain the relationships. The study found significant relation and concluded that males have high degree of loneliness compared to female students. The study also pointed out that the problem of loneliness decreasing with increasing age and level of education.

Keywords-Loneliness, gender, high school, college, university

I. INTRODUCTION

Loneliness is an unpleasant subjective psychological condition emerged as a result of incoherency between the existing social relation of the individual and desired social relation (Ozatca, 2009). According to the related literature, the loneliness is a displeasing and unwanted experience which everybody avoids and which results in anxiety, anger, sorrow and the feeling of being different from others. The loneliness is both a situation and a feeling.

The present study observed the relation between loneliness and gender with reference to level of the education.

II. METHODOLOGY

A total of 3839 students were participated, out of them 2007 are male and 1832 are female students. Out of the total students, 2746 are studying in high schools, 578 in colleges and 515 in a university. Students were assembled in a classroom of the respective schools and asked them to give their response to a question-“Do you feel comfort when stay alone? Three options were provided, i.e., Always, Sometimes and Never. The purpose of the study and the details regarding loneliness were explained in their mother tongue. The response was analyzed using statistical analyses, i.e., Chi-square test, T-test and ANOVA. The observations are presented under Results and Discussion section.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As a whole 43.5% of total students pointed out that they are suffering from high degree of loneliness (Table 1 and Figure 1). The values are 47% for medium degree and 9.5% for low degree loneliness.

Table 1. Degree of loneliness and frequency

Loneliness	Frequency	%
Low	366	9.5
Medium	1804	47.0
High	1669	43.5
Total	3839	100

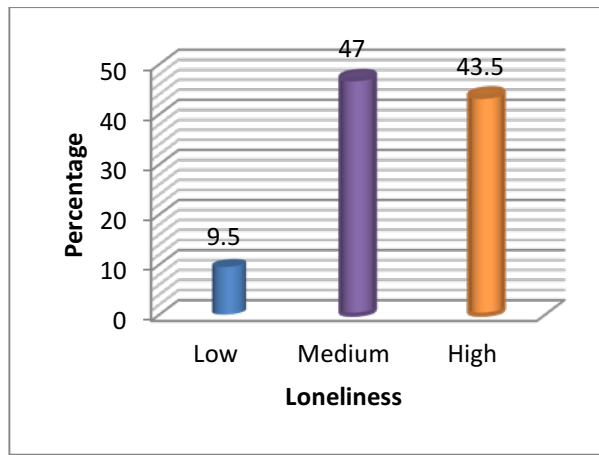


Fig. 1 Degree of loneliness and frequency

Loneliness and gender

The highest percent of the male students (24.6) expressed high degree of loneliness (Table 2 and Fig. 2) compared to the female students (18.9). Chi square test value 27.787 and p value <0.001 are significant and indicate the significant difference in degree of loneliness between male and female students.

Table 2. Chi square test analysis and gender

Gender	Low	Medium	High	Total (%)	Chi-square test value(p-value)
Male	202(5.3)	862 (22.5)	943(24.6)	2007 (52.3)	27.787 (<0.001)
Female	164(4.3)	642 (24.5)	726(18.9)	1832 (47.7)	
Total	366(9.5)	18.4 (47.0)	1669(43.5)	3839(100)	

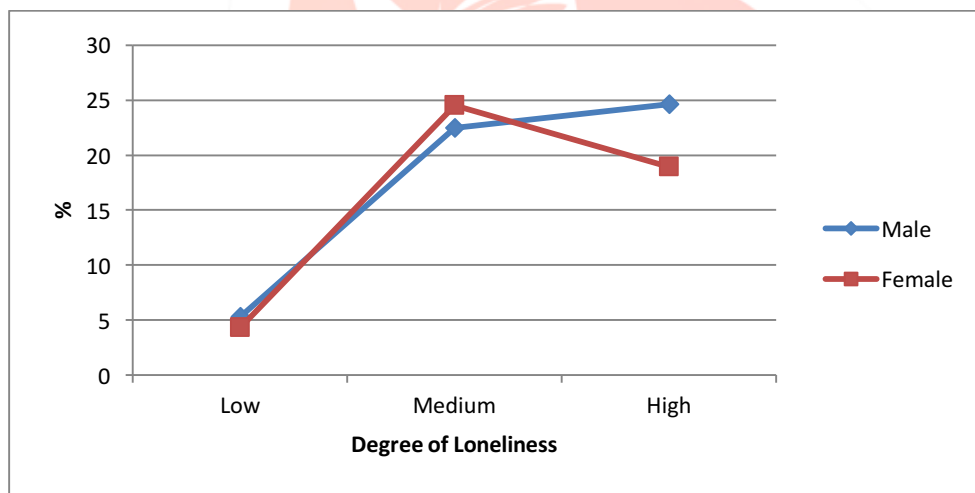


Fig. 2 Degree of loneliness and gender

Loneliness and Level of education

At the school level 36.3% of students expressed high degree of loneliness. It is 4.8% and 2.4% at the college and university level (Table 3 and Fig. 3). In this case also Chi square test values are significant and p is <0.001 supporting the association between loneliness and the level of education. It is observed that degree of loneliness decreased with level of education

Table 3 Loneliness and Level of Education

Level of Education	Low	Medium	High	Total (%)	Chi-square test value(p-value)
School Level	266(6.9)	1086(28.3)	1394(36.3)	2746 (71.5)	256.103 (<0.001)
College Level	53(1.4)	341 (8.9)	184(4.8)	578 (15.1)	
University Level	47 (1.2)	377 (9.8)	91(2.4)	515 (13.4)	
Total	366 (9.5)	1804 (47.0)	1669 (43.5)	3839 (100)	

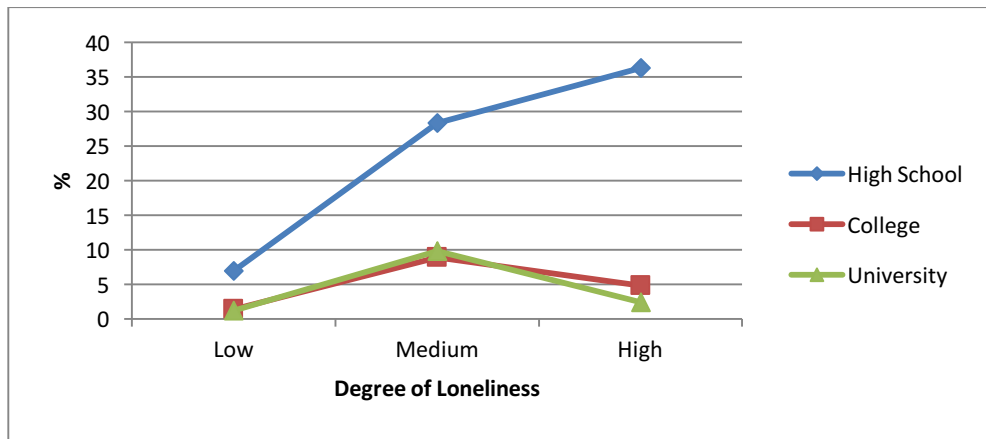


Fig. 3 Degree of loneliness and level of education

T Test

The unpaired t test value is significant and the means are varied between male (2.37) and female (2.31) students (Table 4). The test supports that the loneliness is high in male students compared to female students.

Table 4. Unpaired T test and gender

Gender	Mean ± s.d.	Unpaired t-test (p-value)
Male	2.37±0.659	3.003 (0.003)
Female	2.31±0.626	

ANOVA

ANOVA one way classification value is 68.027 and p-value <0.001 are significant (Table 5).

Table 5. ANOVA one way classification and level of education

Education levels	Mean ± s.d.	ANOVA One way classification (p-value)
School Level	2.41 ± 0.660	68.027 (<0.001)
College Level	2.23 ± 0.599	
University Level	2.09±0.644	

The value highlights the relation between the degree of loneliness and level of education. The mean values are gradually decreased from High school (2.4) to college (2.23) and to the University level (2.09). It clearly indicates that the degree of loneliness reduced with increasing age and level of education.

Theeke et al., (2019) reported gender differences and relationships among loneliness, anger, depression, self management ability (SMA) and biomarkers of chronic illness in chronically ill mid-life adults in Appalachia. The results showed that loneliness in behavioral health assessments in clinical practice and developing and studying the impact of interventions designed to target loneliness as a health problem will be imperative to continued understanding of loneliness and its impact on health.

Gul (2017) studied to investigate students' loneliness levels and their academic anxiety at the college level. He concluded that positive relationship between students' loneliness and academic anxiety, the students who have higher level of loneliness having higher academic anxiety. The result also shows that academic anxiety also differ significantly with respect to gender, but shows no significant difference in their levels of loneliness. This is proven by past studies which suggested that students' levels of loneliness are not related to the gender of the student.

Roque et al., (2015) identified the percentage of variance in loneliness accounted for by social media use and GPA. Participants were 345 urban high school students from Michigan. Gender differences were found for loneliness and the frequency of social media use. Data yielded a weak negative correlation between loneliness and GPA.

Research indicates that loneliness is associated with relatively poor physical health and depression among students. Lin and Huang (2012) investigated the relationships between loneliness and learning burnout. Both loneliness and learning burnout are related negatively to psychological health. Arslan (2010) investigated that loneliness and perfectionism of the university students. The relationship between loneliness and concern over mistakes, doubts about actions, parental criticism was positively significant, there was a negatively significant relationship between loneliness and organization.

Cramer and Neyedley (1998) assessed the magnitude of sex differences in loneliness after accounting for the influence of two covariates: masculinity and femininity. The findings support the hypothesis that males appear reluctant to admit feelings

of loneliness. Borys and Perlman (1985) study support the view that women are more apt to acknowledge their loneliness than men because the negative consequences of admitting loneliness are less for women. Compared with men, women are commonly assumed to be more emotional and to manifest higher rates of certain mental illnesses.

Gender differences in loneliness and depression were examined among university students seeking counseling in Israel (Wiseman et al., 1995). They concluded that Males were significantly higher in loneliness than females, while females were significantly higher in depression than males.

Weiss (1973) states that women are more apt to be lonely than men. Women are said to have lower self-esteem (Hojat, 1982), which given the association between loneliness and low self-esteem means they are more prone to loneliness. But Russell, Peplau, and Cutrona (1980) find no gender differences in relation to loneliness. Deniz (2005) concluded that loneliness levels are higher among male than female students, also confirmed by Ari and Hamarta (2000). Such gender differences might be themselves be subject to cultural differences (Sawir et al., 2008).

The present study observed that the loneliness is high in male students than female and reduced with decreasing age and level of education.

IV. CONCLUSION

The meaning of loneliness changing with the time. Now a days the technological development caused to prefer to be alone earlier, because of individuals psychological problem. The chi square test indicated that there are significant relation between gender and loneliness. It is also supporting that the degree of loneliness decreasing with age and level of education, i.e., from High school to the University. The T test value is significant for the gender and found that loneliness is high in male compared to the female students. From ANOVA significant variation is identified among the three levels of education.

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