



A Study on Peer pressure, Loneliness, and Self-esteem among School Students

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ABSTRACT

In the today's world everyone wants to be perfect and work as per societal needs, in this course they lose their self- esteem and become depressed. Self-esteem is how we value and perceive ourselves, people with low self-esteem can lack confidence, is critical of themselves, and may feel unworthy which can lead to isolation and loneliness. Peer pressure is the feeling of being pushed into doing something (good or bad), people who have a strong self-esteem are better at resisting negative peer pressure and influence. The current research aimed to study the relationship between loneliness, self- esteem, and peer pressure, with a sample of 30 school students. Standardized measures were used to study these variables. The results found a significant negative correlation between self- esteem and loneliness and a negative correlation between peer pressure and self- esteem. The evidences from past studies also suggests that there is a negative correlation between self- esteem and loneliness. To build up self- esteem children can follow some things like, practice self- compassion, celebrate small stuff, build positive relationships, set and achieve small goals, do what makes you happy, and don't compare yourself to others. There are some ways in which you can deal with peer pressure: know limits, plan ahead, practice saying no, pay attention to how you feel, and be confident.

Keywords: *Peer pressure, Loneliness, and Self-esteem, School students*

INTRODUCTION

“The hardest challenge is to be yourself in a world where everyone is trying to make you be somebody else.”

~ E.E Cummings.

Peer are people who are part of the same social group, so the term “peer pressure” refers to the influence that peers can have on each other. Usually, the term peer pressure is used when people are talking about behaviours that are not considered socially acceptable or desirable, such as experimentation with alcohol or drugs. Loneliness is the unhappiness that is felt by someone because they do not have any friends or do not have anyone to talk to. It is the state of being alone and feeling sad about it. The subjective perception that people have of their value or worth is known as self- esteem. It is a basic psychological concept that expresses how someone feels about themselves overall on an emotional level. A strong sense of self- worth is essential for mental health since it affects motivation, behaviour, and the capacity to overcome obstacles in life.

A study was conducted by Bhankhar, Kumar, and Singh (2023) to examine the risk factors of drug abuse among adolescents. It was found that peer pressure and loneliness increases the risk of drug abuse. A study was conducted by Vanhalst et al. (2013) to study the relationship between loneliness and self-esteem. It was found that self-esteem and loneliness influenced one another in a reciprocal manner, it means that the dominant path from self-esteem to loneliness was mediated by social acceptance.

A study was conducted by Tus (2020) on senior high school students. The purpose of study was to examine the psychological perceptions of students, it includes self-concept, self-esteem, and self-efficacy. The findings highlight that self-concept, self-esteem, and self-efficacy do not significantly affect the senior high school student's academic performance.

A study was conducted by Dielman et al. (1987) on fifth and sixth grade students to determine the level of substance abuse. The findings show that peer pressure, self-esteem, and internal health locus of control were significantly and negatively correlated with most of the substance use, misuse.

Peer pressure

According to Clasen and Brown (1985) peer pressure is defined “as a type of influence that peers use to either support people or discourage a certain action or task, regardless of the individual's agreement.” According to Lashbrook (2000), “peer pressure is a specific instance of social influence, which typically produces conformity to a particular way of acting or thinking.”

A study was conducted by Korir and Kipkemboi (2014), on school students. It was found that school environment and peer influence made a significant contribution to the student's academic performance.

A study was conducted by Monica et al. (2013) on 198 Italian university students, to study the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and predictors of frequency of alcohol consumption. It was found that peer pressure was a predictor of alcohol consumption.

A study was conducted by Pushpa, Ramnath, and Sandeep (2017) to study the relationship between family climate and peer pressure among adolescents, a sample of 150 young adults

was collected. It was observed in the finding that there is an inverse relationship between positive family climate and peer pressure.

Loneliness

Gardinner et al. (2018) defined loneliness “as a subjective feeling state of being alone, separated or apart from others, and has been conceptualized as an imbalance between desired social contacts and actual social contacts”. Poscia et al. (2018) defined loneliness as “the way people perceive and experience the lack of interaction”.

A study was conducted by Kumar (2019) on 120 adolescents. To study the nature of loneliness and aggression among adolescent, the findings show that there is a positive correlation between loneliness and aggression of adolescents.

A study was conducted by Quellet and Joshi (1986) on university students. The findings show that there is an inverse relationship between loneliness and self-esteem and positive relationship between loneliness and depression.

A study was conducted by O'Day and Heimberg (2021), the result from the study highlights that social media use (SMU) affects well-being, socially anxious and lonely individual appear to prefer and seek out online social interactions on social media.

Self- esteem

According to Rosenberg (1965), “self-esteem is quite simply one’s attitude toward oneself, he described it as a favourable or unfavourable attitude toward the self.”

A study was done by Naderi et al. (2009). A sample of 153 were taken to study the relationship between self-esteem, gender and academic achievement. The findings show that there is no relationship between self -esteem and academic achievement but self-esteem indicates a strong significant relationship on academic achievement when gender is controlled.

A study was done by Dogan, Totan, and Sapmaz (2013) on 109 college students from Turkey. The findings show that there was positive and significant relationship between psychological well-being, emotional self-efficacy and affect balance, and that psychological well-being and affect balance has a positive effect on self -esteem and happiness, emotional self- efficacy has a positive effect on happiness.

A study was done by Moksnes and Espnes (2013) to study gender differences on life satisfaction and self- esteem among adolescents aged 13-18 years. The findings highlight that boy scored higher than girls on both self-esteem and life satisfaction. Self- esteem was positively associated with life satisfaction.

Purpose

The purpose is to study peer pressure, loneliness, self-esteem among school students.

Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: There will be negative correlation between Self- esteem and Loneliness.

Hypothesis 2: There will be negative correlation between Peer pressure and Self- esteem.

Sample

A total sample of 30 in the age range 13-18 was collected from Hisar city. The participants were informed about the purpose of research and the questionnaire were filled through Google forms each participant was thanked for their cooperation.

Measures

Differential Loneliness Scale: The scale was developed by Nobert Schmidt and Verena Sermat (1983), to measure loneliness in young adults. It measures loneliness in four different areas: romantic/ sexual relationships, friendship, family relationships, and relationships with the community. Scoring can be done by adding up the number of points for each item, the higher the total score, the higher the level of loneliness.

Self- esteem Scale : It was developed by Morris Rosenberg to measure the self- esteem of high school students. It is a 10-item scale, scoring can be done by combined ratings with strongly agree (1) and strongly disagree (4).

Peer pressure Scale : It was developed by Sandeep Singh and Sunil Saini (2010). It is a 25- items scale with five-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The questionnaire is intended to assess an individual's experience with peer pressure and their ability to resist pressures from their peer group.

Procedure

The participants were informed about the purpose of the research and the questionnaires were filled through Google forms. Standardized psychological tests were administered to the participants. Each participant was thanked for their time.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

RESULTS

Table 1: *N, Mean, and SD of Loneliness, Self-esteem, and Peer pressure*

	Loneliness	Self esteem	Peer pressure
N	30	30	30
Mean	9.30	27.2	55.8
Standard deviation	2.91	6.15	13.2

Table 2: *Correlation between Loneliness, self-esteem, and Peer pressure*

	Loneliness	Self esteem	Peer pressure
Loneliness	—		
Self esteem	-0.678***	—	
Peer pressure	0.160	-0.210	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Discussion Of Results

The aim of this study was to gain more understanding of the relationship between self-esteem and loneliness. The results indicate a negative significant correlation between these two variables ($r = -0.678$, $p < .001$), it means if the participant has high level of self-esteem, loneliness will be low and vice versa. As a result, our first hypothesis is accepted that there will be negative significant relationship between self-esteem and loneliness, which aligns with a

previous study conducted by Ghulam et al. (2017) on university hostel living students, it was found that there was negative significant correlation between self-esteem and loneliness.

The findings of the study findings highlight there is a negative correlation between peer pressure and self-esteem ($r = -0.210$). As a result, our second hypothesis is accepted that there is a negative correlation between peer pressure and self-esteem. The result aligns with a previous study conducted by Ralte et al. (2019) on Adolescence, it was found that there was a negative correlation between peer pressure and self-esteem but is non-significant.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this research was to study loneliness, self-esteem, and peer pressure among school students. A sample of 30 students was collected between the age range 13-18 through Google forms. Standardized scales were used to measure loneliness, self-esteem, and peer pressure. The results found that there was a significant negative correlation between self-esteem and loneliness. Another finding indicates that there was a negative correlation between peer pressure and self-esteem. Thus, our hypothesis was accepted. To reduce loneliness children can practice mindfulness, gratitude, acknowledge your feelings, and to foster self-esteem they can practice self-compassion, focus on yourself and seeing your strengths and weaknesses and accepting them.

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