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**LONELINESS AND RISK-TAKING BEHAVIOUR
AMONG YOUNG ADOLESCENTS WHO ARE
STAYING AWAY FROM THEIR FAMILY AND
YOUNG ADOLESCENTS WHO ARE STAYING
WITH THEIR FAMILY**

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ABSTRACT

An individual is said to be feeling lonely when the social needs of that individual are not met. An individual can be with bunch of their friends but still feel like they are alone as Loneliness is not just being socially isolated, it is an emotion or a form of discomfort that an individual might feel. It can be easily said that this is an emotion most of the individual has experienced atleast once in their life as everyone has different expectations regarding their social life and if it is not met they feel neglected. Risk-taking is an ability of an individual to take decisions or actions that can be dangerous or life threatening. Risk taking behaviour is an impulsive attempt which can be either helpful for others or harmful to the self. When an risky behaviour which helpful for another person is taken, it is considered positive risk taking. Meanwhile, when such

behaviour is harmful to the self then it is negative risk taking behaviour. An individual needs motivation to be able take action where they take risk for the sake of saving others. For this reason, an individual in a group is most likely to get influenced by other members of the group and portray positive risky behaviour. Competitive behaviour also play it's part when it comes to such behaviour. An individual might take risky decisions to stand out and show a better performance compared to others in the group. Hostel is a common living place for bunch of individuals, who have to leave the comfort of their home to pursue their education or career. Hostellers are bound to interact with new people and are obligated to share their living space with foreign individuals. It's a natural human tendency to be able to bond with some people but at the same time, not being able to get on with other people. Unlike family, an individual might be living with others under the same roof but still feel unattended to. Every single being is unique to their bones, different lifestyles may also cause clashes among roommates, in this particular situation can cause the individual to feel as if they have no one to turn to and might cause them discomfort in settling around. There can be a situation where an individual might feel ignored when they see two people easily being able to interact with one another while they are not able to do that properly. Small

things might have big effect. This study is undertaken to compare the level of loneliness and risk-taking behaviour among hostellers and day boarders.

Introduction

Loneliness is based on how we experience or feel about our social relationships, it is mostly referred to as subjective point of view or a feeling experienced when our social needs are neglected. A person who lives alone might not experience loneliness whereas an individual surrounded by group of acquaintances might feel alone. An individual might feel as if they do not have anyone to support them or as if they have no one to share their problems to. Everyone experiences loneliness differently, some may experience it as a transitory emotion, i.e., something that is not permanent and is a passing phase. Others might occasionally experience it whereas others might feel lonely most of the time.

Loneliness can also be distinguished as:

Emotional loneliness: this type of loneliness is related to lack of attachment. When an individual feels that they have no one to share their thoughts and daily life with. It is felt when a close friend or a family member who we have close relations with is not available.

Social Loneliness: this refers to the feelings of being left out or mismatch social needs. An individual might feel that there is no one who will listen to their ideas and share similar interests. Everyone has experienced this type of loneliness once in their lifetime. For example, not having anyone to go to one's favorite café with.

Existential Loneliness: it is considered as essential type of loneliness, which helps an individual with their self-exploration. But it is only required to an extent, too much of existential loneliness can lead to mental health issues and can also impact the overall health of the individual.

Loneliness is a feeling which can be caused by the change of environment, lack of close friends, change in working conditions, personal characteristics or degradation in physical and mental health. A person feeling emptiness or disconnected from others can be said to be feeling lonely. An individual might feel lonely when they feel left out from their social circle or feel like no one understands them and experience the feeling of insecurity. Loneliness can interrupt sleep cycle and cause an individual to withdraw from the social events.

Risk is a dangerous situation or condition whereas Risk-taking behaviour can be a danger or a dangerous situation that an individual is ready to or willingly face. An individual might showcase such behaviour for adrenaline rush or in peer pressure. These behaviours are said to consciously or unconsciously controlled with an uncertainty about the outcome. Such behaviours are either helpful for others or harmful for the self. Risk taking behaviour can be identified in two different ways, i.e., positive or negative.

Positive risk-taking behaviour is usually a risky action taken for personal growth or to benefit others. Some individuals take such risk due to competition and peer pressure. But this leads to them taking challenges that others usually avoid or are too scared to take or just take them for granted. Positive risk taking behaviour can be beneficial for the individual and the society.

Whereas, Negative risk-taking behaviour includes a certain form of behaviour which may be harmful to not only the person taking such actions but also to others around them. This form of behaviour certainly have low positive gains or impact. This type of behavior is also influenced by peer pressure but it has highly negative consequences.

Hostel life has been said to be a roller coaster ride of emotions, it can go from feeling free and independent while spending a good time with the individual's roommate to feeling homesick and anxious about this new lifestyle. Some individual might face challenges in adjusting in a new environment as not only they have moved to new place but they also have to live with strangers. Whereas day boarders or day scholars can have the comfort of their beds and home-cooked meals with parents taking care of their health and look after them if they need something. On the different side, Hostellers have to take care of themselves and look after their own needs. **Minchekar, Vikas S. & Mangore Nivrutti D. (2019)**, found that hostellers have low level of home adjustment when compared with day scholars and hostellers also face trouble in emotional adjustment whereas day scholars do not. However, when the social adjustment was studied, it was founded that hostellers and day scholars were equal on that radar. Furthermore, it was concluded that the low level of home and emotional adjustment have a negative impact on the mental health of hostellers.

Hence, Lack of contact with family can lead to the feelings on homesickness which might cause an lonesome experience in hostel. **Boddy C.(2020)**, states that students need care and support as the feelings of loneliness and homesickness are really prominent in the students , especially in the first week of going into a new setting. **Asher S. R. Et al (1984)**, also found that a child's feeling of loneliness and social dissatisfaction is usually related to their social status or sociometric status. However, Loneliness is actually an emotion or state of mind that an individual might experience even when around acquaintances.

Loneliness also impacts our social life. Human being are bound to interact with people around them, but if they are unable to do so then it can impact their social wellness. Person who experiences loneliness tends to become socially isolated as they feel like no one shares their common interest and as if they have no one who will listen to their problems, thoughts and ideas. This was also proven by **Jones W. H. Et al (1982)**, as they concluded that lonely people give less attention to people around them. However, they also found that increased interest or attention from someone can result in change in level of loneliness. Risk taking behaviour is considered to be a heroic action when it is done for the benefit of other or for the gains of the society. An individual is only bound to be taking such actions when they feel like they need to prove themselves or when there is peer pressure. A study by **Gardner M. & Steinberg L.(2005)**, concluded that peers influence the decisions of an individual, especially when making a risky decision. When we are in a group we are bound to make riskier decisions. This is also what **Group Polarization** is about; it is a phenomenon or it can be said that it is a theory which describes how members of the group tend to move towards an extreme point which increases the risk taking behaviour. Extreme point is moving towards what the majority has decided or planned. According to this theory, risk taking increases in group because an individual might feel as if they will not be solely blamed or be responsible for a failed attempt.

However, sometimes rather than the group or peers, an individual is motivated by themselves to take decisions which can be risky and it is mostly done when they feel like they have strong competitors. The individual takes risk mostly to gain power. **Jellison J. M. & Riskind J. (1970)**, experimented on few individual to find shift of an individual to take risk actions and found that social comparisons played a part. They furthered concluded that individual wanted to showcase their abilities and want to prove their worth when compared with others. Hence, they are motivated to take risk to prove their abilities. **McClelland D. & Watson R. I.** Proved in 1973 that people who have high need for power are mostly to take risky decisions.

Methodology

Objective of the study:

- To assess the level of loneliness of the adolescents staying away from their families and those staying with the family
- To assess the level of risk taking behaviour of the adolescents staying away from their families and those staying with the family.

Hypothesis of the study:

H₀ – There will be no significant difference in loneliness among adolescents staying away and those staying with their families.

H₁- There will be no significant difference in Risk taking behaviour among adolescents staying away and those staying with their families.

The study was conducted to find the level of loneliness and Risk taking behaviour among students staying away and students living with their parents. The sample size of 102 was selected which contains 51 hostellers and 51 day scholars within the age range of 18-25.

This is a Quantitative study which aims at finding the impact of independent variable on the dependent variable.

Independent Variable: Living away or with the family

Dependent variable: loneliness and risk taking behaviour

The tools used are Loneliness inventory and Risk-taking behaviour Questionnaire. The data is collected with the mentioned questionnaire and T-test, mean, median mode and standard deviation is used for the statistical analysis of the data.

Result

Table.1 Descriptive analysis of loneliness among adolescents away from their family

S.no	Particular	Value
1.	N	51
2.	Mean	49
3.	SD	10.37882

Table.2 Descriptive analysis of loneliness among students staying with their family

S.no	Particular	Value
1.	N	51
2.	Mean	43.72
3.	SD	10.896

Table.3 Descriptive analysis of risk taking behaviour among students staying away from their family

S.no	Particular	Value
1.	N	51
2.	Mean	124.57
3.	SD	22.9871

Table.4 Descriptive analysis of risk taking behaviour among students living with their family

S.no	Particular	Value
1.	N	51
2.	Mean	134.66
3.	SD	25.9026

Table.5 Comparative Analysis of Loneliness among students staying away and staying with their family

Particular	Hostellers	Day scholars
Mean	49	43.72
Variance	107.72	118.723
Observation	51	51
T stat	0.013928	

Table.6 Comparative Analysis of risk taking behaviour among students staying away and staying with their family

Particular	Hostellers	Day scholars
Mean	124.57	134.66
Variance	528.407	670.947
Observation	51	51
T stat	0.040244	

Discussion

The result shows that the p-value of our data is significant hence we will reject our null hypothesis. The results shows that level of loneliness among adolescents staying away from their family is comparatively higher that level of loneliness among students living with their parents. Whereas, risk taking behaviour among adolescents living with their family is comparatively higher than the risk-taking behaviour among those away from their family.

Conclusion

Hostel live can be fun but also burdening in a way that can make an individual feel lonely and impact their overall well-being. It can also reduce an individual's willingness to take risky decisions and gain appreciation. One of the reasons for this result can be homesickness and inability to adjust in a new environment especially after Covid-19.

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