

A social work study on relationship between timidity, shyness and loneliness

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ABSTRACT

Loneliness is one of the primary issues, which harms social activities especially among young people who need to take part in work force, actively. This paper presents an empirical investigation on the effects of timidity and loneliness among female students who attend in one of Islamic Azad University, Shahreza unit. The proposed study selects 60 students out of 400 female students who were living university dormitory. The survey uses Pearson correlation ratio between timidity and loneliness and our survey indicates that the Pearson correlation ratio is equal to $r=0.11$ with $P\text{-value}=0.33$. Therefore, we can conclude that there is no meaningful relationship between timidity and loneliness when the level of significance is five percent.

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1. Introduction

For years, there have been serious concerns on measuring the relationship between depression and loneliness (Kamath & Kanekar, 1993). Anderson (1999), for instance, performed a cross-cultural comparison of American and Chinese students. Anderson (1988) performed another investigation on measures of depression, loneliness, shyness, and social anxiety. Zhao et al. (2013) investigated the role of social support and self-esteem in the relationship between shyness and loneliness. In their survey, structural equation modeling showed partial mediation impacts of social support and self-esteem between shyness and loneliness. In addition, a multi-group analysis indicated that shy male college students had a more negative self-evaluation compared with their female counterparts. Zhao et al. (2012) investigated self-esteem and humor style as mediators of the impacts of shyness on loneliness among Chinese college students using path analysis. They reported that self-esteem and

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humor style partially mediated the relationship between shyness and loneliness. Their results also indicated a significant path from shyness through self-enhancing humor and self-esteem to loneliness. In addition, a multi-group analysis reported that male college students who were less likely to implement self-enhancing humor were more likely to result in loneliness than their female counterparts were. Ryan et al. (2011) performed an investigation to find out the relationship between the Big Five, shyness, narcissism, loneliness, and Facebook usage. They reported that Facebook users were more extraverted and narcissistic, but less conscientious and socially lonely, than nonusers. In addition, frequency of Facebook use and preferences for specific features were also demonstrated to vary because of certain characteristics, such as neuroticism, loneliness, shyness and narcissism.

Bardi et al. (2010) performed a survey to find out whether shy people use instance message more than other people do. They stated that shyer people had multiple motives for using IM, but that decreasing loneliness was particularly important for them. Future research could investigate how IM and other computerized communications compared with face-to-face interactions between shy and non-shy people. Sheldon (2012) investigated whether there are differences between users and non-users of social network sites in terms of their sensation seeking, life-position indicators, shyness, and loneliness. The survey used the data from a survey of adults 19–76 years old. The results disclosed that compared with an average Facebook user, a non-user was significantly older and scores higher on shyness and loneliness, was less socially active, and less prone to sensation seeking activities. Facebook was not a substitute channel of communication for those who were shy and lonely and lack face-to-face interactions.

Sheldon (2013), in other study, investigated the relationship between shyness and self-disclosure to a Facebook friend as well as self-disclosure to a face-to-face friend. They performed two studies: The first study examined how shyness and social loneliness were association to self-disclosure to a Facebook friend to whom an individual talks most often. The second, follow-up study examined how shyness was associated with self-disclosure to a Facebook friend to whom a person speaks to only through Facebook, and also to a face-to-face friend to whom the participants talk only face-to-face and never through Facebook. Participants were college students from a large research university in the United States. The results of the first study indicated that there was a negative association between shyness and self-disclosure to a Facebook friend. In addition, there was a negative relationship between shyness and self-disclosure to a face-to-face friend.

Laghi et al. (2013) explored the content of on-line and off-line peer interactions among shy and non-shy adolescents in Italy and Canada. There was little general difference in the general content and emotion expressed during the two modalities of interaction with friends, both of which were implemented in a wide variety of ways. Importantly, shy participants implemented the on-line modality more extensively to express negative emotions and to convey content regarding negative exchanges with peers. Monacis et al. (2012) investigated the relationships of shyness with identity styles, emotional intelligence, self-esteem, and intrinsic motivation among university students, as well the role of identity styles within this model. They reported that the diffuse avoidant identity style was mediator in all models, emotional intelligence was positively predictor of intrinsic motivation and negatively predictor of shyness, shyness was negatively predictor of intrinsic motivation and criterion variable of emotional intelligence.

2. The proposed study

This paper presents an empirical investigation on the effects of timidity and loneliness among female students who attend in one of Islamic Azad University, Shahreza unit. In order to find the sample size we need to use the following,

$$n = \frac{N \times z_{\alpha/2}^2 \times p \times q}{\varepsilon^2 \times (N-1) + z_{\alpha/2}^2 \times p \times q}, \quad (1)$$

where N is the population size, $p=1-q$ represents the yes/no categories, $z_{\alpha/2}$ is CDF of normal distribution and finally ε is the error term. Since we have $p=0.5$, $z_{\alpha/2}=1.96$ and $N=400$, the number of sample size is calculated as $n=60$. The study uses a standard questionnaire to measure the relationship between loneliness and shyness and Pearson correlation ratio is applied to analyze the data. The proposed study of this paper considers the following hypothesis.

Main hypothesis: There is a relationship between shyness and loneliness.

3. The results

In order to verify the relationship between loneliness and shyness, we first have a look at basic statistics on the gathered data. Table 1 summarizes the results of our investigation.

Table 1

The summary of some basic statistics

Variable	Min	Max	Mean	Standard deviation
Loneliness	0	75	19.21	15.68
Shyness	28	75	42.73	6.21

Next, we present details of Pearson correlation test between loneliness and shyness. Table 2 shows details of our survey.

Table 2

The summary of Pearson correlation test

	Variable	Loneliness
Shyness	Correlation	0.11
	P-Value	0.38

The result of Table 2 demonstrates that there is not a meaningful relationship between shyness and loneliness when the level of significance is five percent. In other words, the hypothesis of this survey is not confirmed.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, we have presented an empirical investigation to find out the relationship between loneliness and shyness. The study designed a questionnaire and distributed among 60 female students who were attending university dormitory in one of Islamic Azad University located in city of Shahreza, Iran. The results have indicated that there was no meaningful relationship between shyness and loneliness among these students.

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