

Loneliness and Self-esteem among Nursing College Students at Basra University

Doaa Mohammed Bachi, Ph. D* Nuha Saeed Kadhim, Ph. D **

ABSTRACT

Background: Loneliness is a key component of research into the psychological process of human moods and behaviors in the context of forming and maintaining social relationships. Following the collegiate adjustment period, self-esteem was found to be a strong predictor of loneliness.

Aim: The purpose of this study was to determine the level of loneliness and self-esteem among nursing college students. In addition, the researchers wanted to see if there was a link between loneliness and self-esteem among nursing college students.

Methodology: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted at College of Nursing University of Basra. Non probability (purposive sample) sample of 195 students in Nursing College of Basra University from different grade. Scales were adopted and changed after an exhaustive assessment of relevant literature using a questionnaire prepared by the researcher & use the statistical program (SPSS) to analyze the results.

Results: The results demonstrate that students had Moderate level and self-esteem is Moderate level. The findings revealed that there was a significant negative relation between self-esteem and loneliness.

Conclusion: There was moderate level of loneliness and self-esteem among students. There was a negative relation between loneliness and self-esteem as high level of self-esteem leads to decreasing loneliness among students.

Recommendation: Establishing Counseling center or psychiatric clinic at faculty of nursing to identify the students with psychological problems at early stage.

Keywords: Loneliness, Self-esteem, Nursing, Students

INTRODUCTION

The shift from adolescence to adulthood occurs in university. It is a time for university students to explore and realize their sense of identity while also exploring and developing intimate and social ties with others¹.

Loneliness is defined as "negative feelings that develop when one's needs for affection and interpersonal intimacy differ from what one receives. The disparity could be long-standing or due to a shift in one's feelings. Individual social interactions, as well as changes in a person's social needs and desires"².

Loneliness has been shown in several studies to have a detrimental impact on health, satisfaction with life, and well-being³. Loneliness affects around 20% to 28% of the general population⁴. It's no surprise that college students are plagued with loneliness as they journey from adolescence to adulthood and as a transitional time from high school to college⁵.

Following the collegiate adjustment phase, self-esteem was found to be a major predictor of loneliness. This finding revealed that the relationship between self-esteem and loneliness is stable throughout time. Loneliness can also be caused by internal concerns such as a low sense of self⁶. People with low self-esteem often believe they are unworthy of other attention of the public or respect. This could lead to feelings of loneliness and solitude⁷.

OBJECTIVES

1. To Assess the Level of Loneliness and Self-Esteem Among Nursing College Student.
2. To Determine the Relationship Between Loneliness and Self-Esteem Among Nursing College Students at Basra University.
3. To Find Out Relationship Between Loneliness of Nursing Students and Their Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Age, Gender, Social Status, Residence, and Academic Year.

METHODOLOGY

Design: "A descriptive cross-sectional study" was conducted at College of Nursing University of Basra from the period 17th of January 2021 to the 20th of June 2021

Setting: The present study was conducted in Basra governorate at Nursing College University of Basra

Sample of the Study: "Non probability (purposive sample) of 195 students" in Nursing College of Basra University from different grade at nursing college of university Basra

* Assistant Lecturer in Psychiatric Nursing

** Assistant Lecturer in Psychiatric Nursing, College of Nursing, University of Basra

Iraq. E-mail: doaa.bachi@uobasrah.edu.iq

Study instrument: After a thorough examination of the literature and related studies, the questionnaire was approved. The study instrument consists three part: The first part includes: age, gender, social status, resident and grade of the study. The second part is related to loneliness scale was constructed by Russell(8) consist of 20 items each item related from 1(never) , 2 (rare), 3 (sometime) /4 (always). The third part related to self-esteem scale developed by Rosenberg(9) It was used to assess one's self-esteem. This scale is made up of (10) item with answer (strongly agree) (agree) (not insure) (disagree) (strongly disagree).

Data Analysis: The study's findings were examined and evaluated utilizing the (SPSS, Version 26).

RESULTS

Table 1: Descriptive of the Demographic Variables to research sample

Demographic Variables	Variables Classes	Sample study	
		F	%
Sex	Male	34	17.4 %
	Female	161	82.6 %
	Total	195	100 %
Age	17 – 19	55	28.2 %
	20 – 22	127	65.1 %
	23 – 25	13	6.7 %
	Total	195	100 %
Stage	1 st	57	29.2 %
	2 nd	59	30.3 %
	3 rd	45	17.4 %
	4 th	34	23.1 %
	Total	195	100 %
Marital status	Single	184	94.4 %
	Married	10	5.1 %
	Divorce	1	0.5 %
Residence	Center	81	41.5 %
	Rerul	114	58.5 %
	Total	195	100 %

The results demonstrate that more than half of the participants in the study (82.6%) are females. (65.1%) their age between (20-22 year) and (28.2%) their age between (17-19 year) and only (6.7%) their age between (23-25 year), and (29.2%) from 1st stage, (30.3%) 2nd stage, while 3rd stage is (23.1%) and 4th stage is (17.4%), (94.4%) are Single, (5.1%) are Married and only (0.5%) are Divorce. About residence the majority of samples (58%) live outside center, and (41.15%) live in the center (Table 1).

Table 2: Total Level of Loneliness among Students

Level of Loneliness	F	%
Mild	71	36.4%
Moderate	124	63.6%
Total	195	100%

Cut of point= 1 ; 1 -2 = Mild ; 2.1 – 3.1 = Moderate (M); 3.2 – 4.2=Strong

The results demonstrate that about (63.6%) of the study group students had Moderate level, (36.4%) had low level of loneliness (Table 2).

Table 3: The Perception of Nursing Students' Self-Esteem

"Self-Esteem"	F	%
Low	73	37.4%
Moderate	117	60%
High	5	2.6
Total	195	100

Cut of point= 1.33; 1-2.33= L; 2.34 – 3.67 = M; 3.68 – 5.01=H

The results demonstrate that around (60%) of the study group students had Moderate level, (37.4%) had low level and only (2.6%) had high level of self-esteem (Table 3).

Table 4: Results of the Analysis Showing the Relationship Between Self-Esteem and Loneliness

	Level of Loneliness	Level of Self-Esteem
Level of Loneliness	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig.(2-tailed)	-.260
	N	195
Level of Self-Esteem	Pearson Correlation	-.260
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.000
	N	195

There are high correlations between the scales, as seen in the table. The findings revealed that there was a significant negative relation between self-esteem and loneliness. (P<.01) (Table 4).

This chart demonstrates that there is a substantial relationship between students' self-esteem and gender, as well as significant relationships between students and their stage. While there is no statistically significant link between students' self-esteem and their age, marital status, or place of residence (Table 5).

This table demonstrates that the students' Level of Loneliness, gender, and Stage all have a highly significant link. While there is no significant association between students' levels of loneliness and their age, marital status, or place of residence, there is a non-significant relationship between students' levels of loneliness and their age, marital status, or place of residence.

DISCUSSION

The results demonstrate that more than half of the participants in the study (82.6%) are females this finding might be due to that the majority of sample size composed of female students and the Faculty of Nursing at Basra University is predominantly attended by females more than males, this result was supported by Yang¹⁰, who found in a study in Asia, that more than half of the participants in the study were female college students.

The results in figure (2) show that the majority of sample (65.1%) their age between (20-22 year), this result was supported by Ozdemir&Tuncay¹¹, in Turkey, in a study about "Correlates of loneliness among university students" found that the range of age in the study sample was from 18-25years old.

Regarding university grade of nursing students, the current study findings revealed that about (30.3%) from 2nd university grade. This results was inconsistent with a study in Mosul, found that about one third of students at the 1st university grade¹², The results shows that the majority of students (94%) are single, table (1), this results was

Table 5: Results Camper Sample's first aid levels according to Demographic Variables

Demographic Data	Self-Esteem			Chi-Sq	D. F	Level Of Significant	
	Rating	Low	Moderate				High
Age	17-19	23	30	2	3.031	4	0.553 NS
	20-22	45	80	2			
	23-25	5	7	1			
Gender	Male	7	25	2	6.147	2	0.046 HS
	Female	66	92	3			
Stage	1 st	17	38	2	15.02	6	0.020 S
	2 nd	30	28	1			
	3 rd	9	34	2			
	4 th	17	17	0			
Marital Status	Single	66	114	4	7.035	4	0.134 NS
	Married	6	3	1			
	Divorce	1	0	0			
Residence	Center	31	49	1	0.987	2	0.611 NS
	Rural	42	68	4			

Table 6: The Loneliness of Students and Their Demographic Profiles

Demographic Data	"Self-Esteem"		Chi-sq	D. F	Level Of Sig	
	Rating	Low				Moderate
Age	17-19	18	37	1.801	2	0.406 NS
	20-22	50	77			
	23-25	3	10			
Gender	Male	20	14	8.935	1	0.003 HS
	Female	51	110			
Stage	1 st stage	24	33	14.159	3	0.003 HS
	2 nd stage	10	49			
	3 rd stage	21	24			
	4 th stage	16	18			
Marital Status	Single	70	114	3.797	2	0.150 NS
	Married	1	9			
	Divorce	0	1			
Residence	Center	29	52	0.22	1	0.882 NS
	Rural	71	124			

similar to a study in zagazing , found that about (88.21%) of students were unmarried¹³.

Regarding residence, the majority of samples (58%) live outside center of Al-Basra City, and only (41.15%) live in the center, this study similar with (Mahmoud,et .al.,2021)who found majority of the study sample live in city center¹⁴,and this result was inconsistent to a study in Zagazing found that (59.6%) were from rural area¹³. On the contrary, in (Nasir et.al., 2021) study, the urban residents found more¹⁵.

The results in table (2) shows that the students responses to the loneliness domain items indicate that they have shown that the level of loneliness was Moderate (63.6%) This result was supported by Knox et al.,¹⁶, in a study in India; about" The Lonely College Male" found that more than one third of the studied students had severe loneliness feelings. On the contrary, Gnusareva¹⁷, in study carried out in Iran found that the minority of the studied sample had high level of loneliness.

Regarding the distribution of Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale variables among studied sample, the current study findings revealed that more than half of studied sample had Moderate self-esteem level and only (2.6%) had high self-esteem level. on the contrary, ZHOU¹⁶ in study in China about found that more than half had low self-esteem.

The findings in table (3) revealed a negative relationship between loneliness and self-esteem among the students investigated, implying that as loneliness increased, so did self-esteem. This might be because self-esteem influences all area of a person's life, notably their relationships with others. People who have low self-esteem are more likely to avoid social situations and isolate themselves, leading to loneliness as a result of their lack of confidence. These results were similar to a study in zagazing, among the students studied; there was a negative association between loneliness and self-esteem¹² and on the contrary, Gnusareva¹⁷, in study carried out in there was a link between loneliness and self-esteem, according to the study.

In terms of the relationship between self-esteem and gender, the current study's findings revealed that there was a strong relationship between self-esteem and gender, with females' self-esteem being higher than men'. On the contrary, Dhal, et al.,¹⁹ in a study in India about" The study "Adolescent Self-Esteem, Attachment, and Loneliness" discovered no link between self-esteem and sex.

Regarding relation between self-esteem and the Grade, the current study results demonstrated that there was a significant relation between self-esteem and the grade, this result was inconsistent to a study in zagazing found that there is no significant relation between self-esteem and the grade¹³.

Regarding the Relationship between total loneliness score and personnel characteristics of studied sample, the current study revealed that there was The students' grades have a strong correlation .Level of Loneliness and their gender as females' levels of loneliness was higher than that of males. Nearly similar findings were supported by, Gierveld et al.,²⁰ in cambridge in a study about" Loneliness and social isolation" Females had higher levels of loneliness than males, according to the study. On the contrary, Atik,²¹ in a study in found that there was no significant difference in the level of loneliness between both sexes.

Furthermore, the current study's findings reveal that there is a strong correlation between a student's level of loneliness and their grade, On the contrary Kadoumi, et al²². in a study, in Jordon found that there was no significant relation between loneliness and academic year.

The findings of this study revealed non-significant relationship between the students' Level of Loneliness and their Age, Marital status and Residence. This result was in agreement with King et al.,²³ in Australia found that there was significant relation between loneliness and residence.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher concludes that students have a moderate degree of loneliness and self-esteem. Loneliness and self-esteem were also linked, with a higher degree of self-esteem leading to less loneliness among students. The self-esteem of the students was linked to their gender and stage. In addition, there was no significant link between the students' self-esteem and their age, marital status, or place of residence. The amount of loneliness among the students was highly correlated with their gender and stage of life.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Creating a counseling center or psychiatric clinic at the nursing faculty to detect students with psychological issues early on.
2. There should be lectures on how to boost self-confidence and overcome shyness, which prevents people from participating, interacting, and forming relationships and friendships.
3. Teachers should communicate with and be connected to their pupils. Also, plan classes and talks to teach students how to improve their social communication skills, conquer their fear of loneliness, and communicate with their colleagues.
4. More research on the impact of loneliness symptoms on academic success should be conducted.

Authorship Contribution: All authors share equal effort contribution towards (1) substantial contributions to conception and design, acquisition, analysis and interpretation of data; (2) drafting the article and revising it critically for important intellectual content; and (3) final approval of the manuscript version to be published. Yes.

Potential Conflict of Interest: None.

Competing Interest: None.

Acceptance Date: 15 November 2021

REFERENCES

1. Ozdemir U, Tuncay T. Correlates of loneliness among university students. *J Child Adoles Psychiatry Ment Health* 2008;2(29):1-6.
2. Lauder W, Siobhan S, Kerry M. Community survey of loneliness. *J Adv Nurs* 2004; 46(1):88-94.
3. Hawkley LC, Cacioppo JT. Loneliness matters: A theoretical and empirical review of consequences and mechanisms. *Ann Behav Med* 2010; 40(2):218-27.
4. Cacioppo JT, Patrick W. Loneliness: Human nature and the need for social connection. WW Norton & Company, 2008.
5. Vanhalst, J. Loneliness in Adolescence: Developmental Course, Antecedents, and Consequences, 2012.
6. Nurmi JA, Toivonen S, Salmela-Aro K, et al . Social levels and loneliness. *J Soc Psychol* 2021;137(6):764-77.
7. Cherry K. Psychology: Causes, Effects and Treatments for Loneliness, 2016.
8. Russell DW. UCLA Loneliness Scale (Version 3): Reliability, validity, and factor structure. *J Pers Assess* 1996; 66(1):20-40.
9. Rosenberg M. Society and the adolescent self-image. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 1965; 46(1):30-40
10. Yang J. Relationship between gender traits and loneliness: The role of self- esteem 2009; 6(1):20-40
11. Ozdemir U, Tuncay T. Correlates of loneliness among university students. *J Child Adoles Psychiatry Ment Health* 2008;2(29):1-6.
12. Younis NM, Mahmoud M, Ahmed A, et al. University Students' Attitude Towards E-Learning. *Bahrain Medical Bulletin* 2021;43(2):460-2.
13. Ibrahim SH, Mohammed MS, Abd-Alla SE . Relationship between Loneliness and Self-esteem among Nursing College Students at Zagazig University. *Zagazig Nur J* 2017; 13(1):774.
14. Ahmed MM, Younis NM, Hussein AA. Prevalence of Tobacco use among Health Care Workers at Primary Health care Centers in Mosul City. *Pak J Med Health Sci* 2021;15(1): 421-4.
15. Muwfaq YN, Ahmed MM, Abdulsalam RR. Assessing Quality of Life in Palliative Care. *Bahrain Medical Bulletin* 2021;43(3):594-6.
16. Knox DK, Vail-Smith K, Zusman M. The lonely college male. *Int J Men's Health* 2007; 6(3):273-9.
17. Gnusareva V. Levels of loneliness among Irish and non-Irish students studying in Dublin and its impact on self-esteem and social support. *J Appl Psychol* 2012;55(12): 259-86
18. ZHOU S. Gratifications, Loneliness, Leisure Boredom and Self-esteem as Predictors of SNS-Game Addiction and Usage Pattern among Chinese College Students. *Int J Cyber Beh Psychol Learning* 2010;5(2):34-48.
19. Dhal A, Bhatia S, Sharma V, et al. Adolescent Self-Esteem, Attachment and Loneliness. *J Ind Assoc* 2007;3(3):61-3.
20. Gierveld , Tilburg T, Dykstra P. Loneliness and social isolation. In: Vangelisti, A. & Perlman, D., (eds.) *Cambridge handbook of Personal Relationships*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014, 71-88.
21. Atik G. The role of locus of control, self-esteem, parenting style, loneliness and academic achievement in predicting bullying among middle school students. *Walden University* 2016; 30(19):90.
22. Kadoumi K, Sawalha A, Momani M. Psychological loneliness among Arab students. *J Internet Med Res* 2012; 8(4):349
23. King S, Garrett R, Wrench A, et al. (2010). The loneliness of relocating: Does the transition to university pose a significant health risk for rural and isolated students? *Journal Health Sci* 2010;1(2):1-5.