



A Study of Loneliness Feeling among Post Graduate Disable Student

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to determinants of loneliness of disable and non-disable students. This sample include 115 postgraduate students of different districts of Uttar Pradesh selected by purposive sampling technique. Out of 115 sample, 65 were selected from disabled group, mainly orthopedically handicapped, visual impaired and hearing impaired . Out 65 disabled sample, 35 were female and 30 were male disabled. Further, out of 50 normal control 25 were male and 25 female. Hindi version of perceived loneliness scale was administered to assess their loneliness level. The inventory has 36 questions based on social and economical problems.

INTRODUCTION

Loneliness refer to individual's subjective perception that he/she lacks close interpersonal relationship. An individual is lonely if he or she desires close interpersonal relationships, but is unable to establish them. According Peplau and Perlman (1982), "loneliness is the unpleasant experience that occurs when a person's network of social relation is deficient in some way". There are three approaches which describes loneliness. The first approach emphasizes inherent human needs intimacy. The second emphasizes people's perception and evaluation of their social relation and the third approach loneliness identifies insufficient social reinforcement as the main deficiency experienced by lonely people.

Loneliness is the perception of an individual that his social relationships are not as expected and it develops as a result of a sense of belonging (Arkar, 2004). Loneliness is defined by different names according to the causes and symptoms. Weiss divides loneliness as emotional and social loneliness in theory and states that emotional loneliness is related to the family, a special friend and relationships while social loneliness is connected with friendships in the social environment (Beck, 1961).

Loneliness as an important personality variable in current psychological literature is of particular interest to social psychologist. Probably most people experience painful feeling of isolation and loneliness at sometime their lives.

METHOD

Sample : This study includes 115 sample. Out of 115 sample, 65 were selected from disabled group, mainly OH, VI, HI, selected on the base of purposive sampling techniques studying at P.G. level. Out of 65 disabled sample 35 were female and 30 were male disabled. Further, in the normal group total sample were 50 selected on the based on purposive sampling technique. Out of 50 normal control 25 were male and 25 female.

STUDY TOOLS

Following tools we administered to get the information and date-

- 1) Social Demography data set.
- 2) Perceived loneliness scale (Jha, P K, 1997)

PERCEIVED LONELINESS SCALE

This scale was developed by Dr. Praveen Kumar Jha in 1997. This loneliness scale is a unidimensional self-report research tool which gives a holistic estimate of loneliness of an individual in a five-point Likert format. This scale includes 36 itmes. The reliability of the test on Kuder-Richardson formula was to be .65 and test retest reliability was to be .84.

PROCEDURE

The present study was conducted on those 65 disabled and 50 normal controls including 30 male 35 female disabled and 25 normal male and 25 normal female who fulfilled the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The sample was selected using purposive sampling technique. The mean age of disabled was 24.29 ± 2.61 and for normal 23.86 ± 2.10 . The selected sample was administered sociodemographic data sheet to get information basic demographic variables and to assess loneliness the perceived loneliness scale was administered to all participants with prior verbal consent. Data were analyzed using SPSS 20.0 version. Continuous variable were analyzed using t-value and categorical variables were analyzed using chi-square test. Pearson r was computed to find out the correlation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The present study was conducted to find out the differences between disabled and non disabled on loneliness. Both groups were assessed on different demographic variables before assessing the loneliness. The results were presented in different tables.

Table - 1 showing differences of age and monthly income of both groups. It reveals that disabled and non disabled groups were statistically not significantly differing on age. As both groups includes age range of 19 to 32 years. The mean age of disabled group was 24.29 ± 2.61 and for non disabled group was 23.86 ± 2.10 . In this study mainly include young adults because many previously studies higher loneliness among adolescents (Pavri, 2006, Bernnan, 1982; Cutrona, 1982) and in elderly (Yeh and Lo, 2004).

Although both groups were significantly differ (0.01) on family monthly income. The monthly income for disabled group was 17335.84 ± 171782.75 and 9084.00 ± 7267.04 for nondisabled group. Family income may play a role in loneliness feeling but it is not clear in regard of disabled. In general population Peplau and Perlman (1982) reported that women with low economic status and minimal educational attainment experience greater loneliness, while more non-working men and older men experience isolation. On the other hand Li-Jane and Shi-Kai (2007) found that college males experienced more loneliness than females in global and social loneliness. To explore the effect of income more comprehensive studies are needed.

Table – 1 Showing difference of age and monthly income

	Disabled N = 65		No-disabled N = 50		t-value (df=113)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Age	24.29	2.61	23.86	2.10	.95 (NS)
Monthly income	17335.84	171782.75	9084.00	7267.04	3.181**

**significant at 0.01,

NS = not significant

Table – 2 Showing difference in other demographic characteristics as gender, marital status, family type, residential area. Percent of male disabled 46.2% compare to 53.8% of female disabled, and percent of male non-disabled 50% and female non-disabled 50% were included. No significant gender difference was in the present study on chi-square.

Similarly both group disabled and non-disabled were not significantly differs on marital status and residential area. However disabled and non-disabled group significantly differ on family type. In the present study most of the sample of both groups was unmarried for example 81.5% and 78% respectively. But most of the non-disabled (96%) were living in combined family compare to disabled (55.4%)

The present study included 32.3% of urban disabled, 58.5% of rural disabled and 9.2% of semi urban disabled compare to, 22% urban non-disabled, 68% rural non-disabled and 10% semi urban non-disabled. Both groups were significantly not differing on residential area.

Table – 2: Showing difference in other demographic characteristics

		Disabled N(%)	Non-disabled N (%)	Chi-square
Gender	Male	30 (46.2%)	25 (50%)	.168 (NS)
	Female	35 (53.8%)	25 (50%)	
Marital Status	Married	12 (18.5%)	11 (22%)	.221 (NS)
	Unmarried	53 (81.5%)	39 (78%)	
Family Type	Combined	36 (55.4%)	48 (96%)	23.67**
	Nuclear	29 (44.6%)	2 (4%)	
Residential Area	Urban	21 (32.3%)	11 (22%)	1.507 (NS)

	Rural	38 (58.5%)	34 (68%)
	Semi Urban	6 (9.2%)	5 (10%)

**significant at 0.01 level

NS = not significant

Table – 3 is showing difference in loneliness between disabled and non-disabled groups. It reveals that disabled and non disabled groups were significantly not differing on disabled and non-disabled. The result shows that the score on perceived loneliness scale for disabled is 93.58 ± 14.96 and for non-disabled is 88.52 ± 15.08 . The t value is found 1.793 that is not significant. This indicates that disabled and non-disabled feel similar pattern of loneliness. The result is similar to our hypothesis that stated there would not be significant difference in loneliness between disabled and non-disabled. One of previous study reported signified difference between physical disability and non-disabled on their loneliness (Rokach, et al., 2006). This result variation might come due to the nature of disabled sample involved in the study. In that study the main cause of disability was chronic physical condition like multiple sclerosis, osteoporosis, Parkinson's, arthritis etc. or nature of social support. Moreover, I tried to categorized on the base of severity of loneliness of both group it also indicated no significant difference (table 4).

Table – 3. Showing difference in loneliness between disabled and Non-disabled

	Perceived Loneliness				Significant level
	N	M	SD	t (df)	
Disabled	65	93.58	14.96	1.793 (113)	Not significant
Non-disable	50	88.52	15.08		

We tried to find out the difference between male and female younger adults without considering the disability status. Results shows (table 4) that there is nno significant difference between both genders in perceived loneliness. The mean score for male was 88.60 ± 13.60 and for female was 93.93 ± 16.15 . The t-value was to be found 1.906. This result supports our hypothesis that said that there would not be significant difference on loneliness between male and female. When compared the date on category wise on loneliness severity (table 6) on chi-square test it was also not to be found significant difference between male and female on loneliness.

Table – 4 : Showing difference in loneliness between Male and Female

	Perceived Loneliness				Significant level
	N	M	SD	t (df)	
Disabled	55	88.60	13.60	1.906 (113)	Not significant
Non-disable	60	93.93	16.15		

Though, no loneliness categories defined for 20-32 age groups in test manual. So on the basis mean (88.52) and SD (15.08) of normal date (N=50) on present study our own perceived loneliness categories were defined as above 103.60 score for high loneliness, 73.44 to 103.60 score for moderate loneliness and below 73.44 score for low loneliness.

In the present study on the basis of this category secured score by disabled and non-disabled group were categorized into three broad category namely Low loneliness, Moderate or Average loneliness, and non-disabled. It reveals that disabled and non disabled groups were statistically not significantly differing on Chi-square was 1.507.

However it shows that 24.6% of disabled are within high loneliness category compare to 18% non-disabled. Moderate loneliness of disabled 66.2% low or no loneliness of disabled 9.2% and percent of high loneliness of non-disability 18%, moderate loneliness of non-disabled 68%, 14%. This indicated disabled feel more loneliness than non-disabled. Previous finding also reported more loneliness among disabled (38%) compared to non-disabled (29%) (Disability survey, 20136 New Zealand).

Table – 5 : Showing loneliness category of disabled and non-disabled

		Disabled	Non Disabled	Chi square value	Significant level
		N (percentage)	N (percentage)		
Loneliness Category	High loneliness	16 (24.6%)	9 (18.0%)	1.152	No significant
	Moderate loneliness	43 (66.2%)	34 (68.0%)		
	Low or no loneliness	6 (9.2%)	7 (14.0%)		

Though, gender difference showing no significant difference on loneliness of disabled and non-disabled group. However, female disabled (28.6%) are feeling high loneliness compare to male disabled (20%). The detail findings have been shown on table 6. Previous finding also indicated feeling more lonely among disabled women than disabled men (Disability survey 2013, New Zealand).

Table – 6: Showing gender wise loneliness category of disabled and not disabled

	Disabled		Non-Disabled		Chi-square
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
High loneliness	6 (20%)	10 (28.6%)	1 (4%)	8 (32.0%)	1.152 (NS)
Moderate loneliness	20 (66.7%)	23 (65.7%)	22 (88%)	12 (48.0%)	
Low loneliness	4 (13.3%)	2 (5.7%)	2 (8%)	5 (20%)	

Showing correlational between loneliness and percentage of disability in Perceived loneliness was -0.203 and it reveals no significant correlation between percentage of disability and perceived loneliness. This finding does not support our hypothesis stating positive correlation between both variables.

Table – 7: Showing Correlation between loneliness and percentage of disabled

	Perceived loneliness	Not significant
Percentage of disabled	-0.203	

CONCLUSION

The present study was done to find out the loneliness among disabled and non-disabled younger adults studying at post graduate level. On the basis of findings in the present study we can conclude that younger disabled perceive loneliness almost similar to non-disabled. However, in both group disabled and non-disabled, more female felt high level of loneliness compare to male. Further, it can be say that severity of disability does not lead to loneliness.

FUTURE GUIDELINES

- Loneliness should be assessed including various categories of disabilities on large sample.
- Further study needed in all groups of disabled considering various demographic variables.
- Date should be normalize with different variable and groups.

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