
Interpersonal Dependency and Life Satisfaction Among Young Adults

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ABSTRACT

The observable characteristics of the young adults of this century has claimed their determination to become an independent personality. But for the same they depend on one another. Gender based studies on interpersonal dependency have shown that it plays a prominent role in individuals personal life. The present study aims to find “Interpersonal Dependency and Life Satisfaction Among Young Adults. The sample size of the study was 91 and the data were collected from the college students of age group ranging from 18 - 24. The method used to select the sample population was a random sampling method. The data was analysed using the spearman bivariate correlation method. The findings of the study revealed that there is a positive relation between interpersonal dependency and life satisfaction among young adults.

INTRODUCTION

The very nature of young adults in this century is noticeable that they are struggling to move forward with their lives independently and they do put in a lot of effort in order to explore and pursue new adventures. And in order to achieve said independence, they depend considerably on the people around them initially, be it their peers, parents or family members. Due to this, the question arises as to whether they are able to achieve their goals and expectations with the influence of the people they depend on and asking further questions such as how and why and whether the chances of achieving said goals are directly proportional to their dependence on the elements around them.

Concerning the above context, interpersonal dependency and life satisfaction can be considered as the main factors that complement each other in the present state of affairs. College students are being taken as the sample so as to understand the relation between interpersonal dependency among them and their overall life satisfaction. It also analyzes the level of self confidence, emotional reliance and assertion of autonomy and the comprehensive connection of these with life satisfaction in their personal life.

Interpersonal dependency refers to a behavioural pattern or thoughts that are closely associated with other people. It is our tendency to rely on other people for emotional support, motivation and other essential resources even during independent situations. At this present scenario, people are struggling to be independent and not to depend on others for their essentials. This kind of attitude is mostly seen in young adults of the present generation. They get detached from their family after a period of their teenage years. Being independent is a very progressive thought but at some points the young adults forget about certain values that we could form from relationships with others. Here comes the significance of the term interpersonal dependency. This dependent behaviour can be an obsession at some point of life. We have the tendency to rely on other people for each and every thing. This is due to certain factors that contribute to interpersonal dependency that is lack of self confidence where people are not aware about their personality and thought processing. Another component is the emotional reliance on other people. This happens when the person is emotionally unstable and not able to control the emotions. Assertion of autonomy is the self declaration that one makes within himself / herself. When we are not aware of ourselves we tend to depend on other people.

Many psychological theories are associated with interpersonal dependency. Social learning theory proposed by Albert Bandura says that social behaviour is learned by observing and imitating the behaviour of others (Albert Bandura, 1963). Socialisation is one of the processes by which we learn how to behave in a social setting. Here we are learning things from our very day of birth by imitating or observing others. In psychoanalytic theory of famous psychologist Sigmund Freud, object relation states that humans are not only motivated by sexual drives but they are motivated by the need for contact with others - the need to form relationships (Sigmund Freud, 1970) People are encouraged by themselves to form some healthy relations with others. These relations help them in many ways.

“Life satisfaction is the degree to which a person positively evaluates the overall quality of his/her life as a whole. In other words, how much the person likes the life he/she needs” (Ruut Veenhoven 1996) It is something that we can achieve by perceiving our life in a more optimistic way. “An overall assessment of feelings and attitudes about one’s life at a particular point in time ranging from negative to positive” (Ed Diener) Especially in the transition period of teenage to young adults, people meet different people, different opportunities, different circumstances etc. But everything new to them may either depress or excite them. Life satisfaction is “A cognitive assessment of an underlying state thought to be relatively consistent and influenced by social factors” (Ellison and colleagues 1989)

People can be judgemental towards their own life. When they are not properly aware about their capabilities or when criticised by the surrounding, they can be worried about their life. When it comes to young adults, due to their ignorance they could not enjoy their life to its fullest. They always have high expectations about their future and worry about the present. They depend more on instant happiness. Life satisfaction is the evaluation of one’s life as a whole, not simply one’s current level of happiness. Happiness can be temporary and more dependable. But life satisfaction is more stable and long - lived and is broader in scope.

Life chances can be explained as the opportunities each individual has to improve their quality of life. By grabbing each opportunity we can improve our lifestyle and performance, gradually bringing up our life satisfaction. Mostly for young adults, they meet with different life chances each day. This enhances their own productivity in life. Life can be unpredictable sometimes and it adds more excitement. There can be things that have happened, that are happening, or that will happen. This is known as courses of events. These events can change our attitude towards life. Flow of experiences is different situations where the individual can provide an energised focus. In this mental state, the person can stay focused and grab opportunities.

Evaluation of life are the thoughts that come to one’s mind when he/she looks back into their life. This can be in an optimistic or pessimistic manner. It varies from different people. As a result of the vibrant energy produced by the young adults, they assess their life in a lively way.

Interpersonal dependency and life satisfaction are two broad terms which can complement each other at times. When we look upon the lifestyles of present young adults, we can see that they are more stressed and lack certain values that they should have. These people behave quite actively in social settings but at the same time they show their aggressiveness in the same context. When it comes to maintaining good relations, they even lack parental relations. College students basically depend on one another for their academic purposes, and also to be emotionally stable. Peer groups help these young students for their various physical and mental resources. Some of them are good at keeping healthy peer groups but at the same time it can bring them into a different situation where they are not able to survive without them. When they are mature enough to handle those groups and bring it to a beneficial factor of life, the level of satisfaction towards their life increases. The study helps to understand the nature of dependency in young adults and also to assess their life satisfaction. By this, suggestions can be given to them regarding enhancing the quality of life. Since this is the very beginning point of their adulthood, this analysis could help them.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A study was conducted by Bornstein et al. (1993) among 92 healthy undergraduate students, 60 women and 32 men, to analyse the relationship between interpersonal dependency and health service utilisation. The study concluded that a dependent person who is of a cooperative, compliant individual and who looks to other people for nurturance, projection and support prefer to seek the advice and guidance of others rather than acting according to his own beliefs and inclinations.

Haggerty et al. (2015) investigated how interpersonal dependency and detachment relate to behavioural problems, subjective well-being, interpersonal problems and global symptom severity in adolescent inpatients. The findings of the study revealed that the destructive overdependence (DO) and dysfunctional detachment (DD) were positively related to interpersonal distress, behavioural problems and symptom severity and negatively related to psychological health and well-being. Health dependency (HD) was associated with fewer behavioural problems and less symptom severity and positively related to subjective well-being.

Ulusoy Yagmur and Durmus Emine (2015) studied the prototype of interpersonal dependency in Turkish culture. The sample comprised 252 students (155 females and 97 males) of Inonu University whose ages ranged between 17 and 35. The study concluded that the prominent prototypes among dependency in interpersonal relationships are showing love, trust building, giving harm and socialisation. Love oriented dependency has a more compatible function. The sample also associated the interpersonal dependency concept with trust building.

McClintock and Anderson (2013) examined the efficacy of a brief mindfulness intervention for alleviating the affective consequences of interpersonal dependency. The study was conducted among 70 undergraduate students. The findings of this study shows that mindfulness training may be a beneficial adjunct for treating interpersonal dependency and possibly dependent personality disorder.

HYPOTHESES

1. There will be no significant relationship between interpersonal dependency and life satisfaction in college students.
2. There will be no significant relationship between emotional reliance and life satisfaction in college students.
3. There will be no significant relationship between self confidence and life satisfaction in college students.
4. There will be no significant relationship between assertion of autonomy and life satisfaction in college students.

OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the relationship between interpersonal dependency and life satisfaction in college students.
2. To assess the relationship between emotional reliance and life satisfaction in college students.
3. To assess the relationship between self confidence and life satisfaction in college students.
4. To assess the relationship between assertion of autonomy and life satisfaction in college students.

METHODOLOGY

This study is intended to find the relation between interpersonal dependency and life satisfaction among young adults. The sample size of the study was 91 students of age varying from 18 to 24 years. 46 females and 45 males were included in the study. The data were collected from different colleges in Kerala. The samples were selected using convenient sampling. The data collection was administered using google

forms. Consent was taken from each participant before the data collection. Confidentiality was assured to the participants. Spearman bivariate correlation was found using SPSS - 28.0.1.1(14).

The students were given questionnaires according to their convenience. Opportunity for asking doubts during the survey was provided. The first sheet of the survey was intended to collect socio- demographic details like age, gender, course, relationship status and area of residence. The second and third sheets of the survey consisted of questions about their interpersonal dependency and life satisfaction.

Hirschfeld et al.,(1977) designed a 48 item instrument to measure the thoughts, behaviours, and feelings revolving around the need to associate closely with valued people. The scale has 3 subscales which are emotional reliance, self-confidence and assertion of autonomy. The IDI is scored by summing the responses from each of the three subscales to yield scores for each one. The IDI has a good internal consistency, with split- half reliability that ranges from .72 to .91 and has fairly good concurrent validity. Neugarten et al.,(1961) introduced an 18 item instrument to measure the life satisfaction of older people. The LSIZ is easily scored by assigning one point to each item that is “correctly” checked and summing these scores. The scale has good concurrent validity and reliability was established.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The collected data was analysed based on the formulated objective and hypothesis. The scores of interpersonal dependency and its subscales emotional reliance, self confidence and assertion of autonomy and life satisfaction were assessed using Spearman bivariate correlation method. The findings have been presented in the table

Table 1 Analysis of correlation between interpersonal dependency and life satisfaction among college students.

Variables	Life Satisfaction
Interpersonal Dependency	0.062
Emotional Reliance	0.056
Self - Confidence	-0.020
Assertion of Autonomy	0.005

Interpersonal dependency was positively correlated with life satisfaction ($r=0.062$). The value is not significant. Therefore the null hypothesis which states that there will be no significant relationship between interpersonal dependency and life satisfaction is rejected. Emotional reliance and life satisfaction had a positive correlation ($r=0.056$). The value is not significant. Therefore the null hypothesis which states that there is no relationship between emotional reliance and life satisfaction among college students is rejected. Self-confidence and life satisfaction has a negative correlation ($r= -0.020$). The value is not significant. Therefore the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between self-confidence and life satisfaction is accepted. Assertion of autonomy has a positive relationship with life satisfaction ($r =0.005$). The value is not significant. Therefore the null hypothesis which states that there will be no significant relationship between assertion of autonomy and life satisfaction is rejected.

As the relationship between interpersonal dependency and life satisfaction were examined in this study, a positive relationship was found between all the variables except self-confidence.

Interpersonal dependency is considered as a positive factor in the life of adults. As dependent behaviour of a young adult increases the study reveals that there will be a constructive change in their day to day life. As a result they could have more gratification. The study also discloses that as the young adults emotionally depend on others for nurturance, protection and support, they become more emotionally stable and thus they could achieve life satisfaction in their life. Self-confidence is the potential to have trust upon our own strengths, skills and abilities and to perceive life with realistic expectations and to overlook criticisms positively. It can amplify young adults' lifestyle and time ahead. The study shows that there is a negative relation between self-confidence and life satisfaction, which is a contradiction. The disagreement may be due to the errors occurring during the involvement of the participants at the time of survey. Assertion of autonomy is the self declaration that one makes within himself / herself. As the autonomous attitude escalates, the confidence level rises and tends to gain a strong personality. The investigation showed that as this behavioural pattern is evident in the young adults, the level of life satisfaction increases. As the study concludes there is a positive relation between interpersonal dependency and life satisfaction in young adults. The existing relationships in the young adults upgrade their life pattern thus resulting in a long term happiness.

There were few limitations to this study which must be taken into consideration while interpreting the results. As the self-reported data cannot be precise there is a chance of variation in interpersonal dependency, emotional reliance, self-confidence, assertion of autonomy and life satisfaction values. The participants in this study were mostly from different colleges in Kerala, so there can be an influence of the educational system and lifestyle.

CONCLUSION

The positive relation between interpersonal dependency and life satisfaction was evident in the study conducted among the young adults from different colleges in Kerala. Peer relationships as well as parental and other relationships have a positive influence on young adults. Therefore there is a need to form healthy relationships in young adults.

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