



## EMPIRICAL INDICATORS OF LONELINESS EXPERIENCE IN STUDENTS

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**Abstract.** Loneliness involves anxious feelings about the lack of connection or communication with other person, both in the present and in the future. This article dedicated the issue of loneliness as a socio-psychological phenomenon, analyzed the theoretical and methodological foundations of this aspect, and also revealed the results of an empirical study of the feeling of loneliness of students.

In recent years, the phenomenon of loneliness has attracted psychological scientists as one of the pressing problems of our modern society. Statistics show that during the pandemic, the tendency to loneliness increased in young people compared to older people. The problem of loneliness is widely studied in foreign psychology, where it is studied on the basis of various theories, concepts, approaches, positions, directions. This article presents the analytical results of our research on the mechanisms of perception of loneliness by the youth of Uzbekistan. The degree of statistical reliability of the results obtained was confirmed by methods of mathematical statistics: the Mann-Whitney criterion, as well as the Spearman correlation coefficient.

**Keywords:** loneliness, depression, anxiety, suicidal predisposition, differential analysis, scale of general loneliness experience, scale of dependence on communication, scale of positive loneliness, correlation analysis

### Introduction

For centuries, the influence of civilization on society has come from changing living conditions. But one question - the question of the person himself, his inner state of mind and the true meaning of his existence still remains controversial [4, p. 6]. In this sense, the study, research and analysis of youth psychology from the point of view of today shows the need to scientifically reveal its significance in the upbringing of a perfect personality. In the scientific research carried out in the world, scientific research is conducted on the preservation of human mental health, justified by the peculiarities of loneliness, manifested in the form of emotional experiences. They also include the need to study such issues as determining the priorities of the higher education system in the education of individuals who comply with the principles of social and psychological development, the need to raise the process of training highly qualified personnel with modern knowledge and high personal potentials to a qualitative level. Personal potential is the qualities of people that fundamentally affect the results of the activity in which they are involved in a particular field of activity.

The problem of loneliness has aroused interest in all historical periods and is currently a topic of discussion among philosophers, cultural scientists, psychologists, sociologists, social psychologists. Loneliness as a specific experience of an individual is studied from a psychological point of view in the works of R. Weiss, K. Horney, D. Meyers, S. Freud, K. Jung and others. Based on the analysis of empirical data, the phenomenon of loneliness is described in

the works of D. Russell, K. Rogers, J. Young and others [3], [6]. Through the prism of social processes, loneliness is comprehended by K. Bowman, E. Durkheim, R. Merton, A. Maslow, D. Rismen, A.D. Elyakov, A. Camus, J. Lipovetsky, E. Fromm. The issues related to the study of student youth loneliness are considered in the studies of V. Weiss, K. Solano, J. Young, R. Friedman, Y.D. Babaev, S. Grof, E. Kleinenberg. In most of the works of these authors, the problem of loneliness is outlined in the context of the lack of necessary social skills in young people [2, p. 17].

In our republic in recent years, important tasks have been outlined aimed at the regulatory and legal consolidation of the requirements for the study of youth psychology and laying the foundations for their implementation by: “training highly qualified, creatively thinking personnel capable of independently making decisions based on international standards, the manifestation of their intellectual abilities and their formation as spiritually enlightened personalities ...” [1], “education of spiritually and mentally developed youth with serious views on life situations” [3]. The practical implementation of these tasks creates the need to search for new theoretical solutions aimed at deepening scientific research on the study of psychoemotional states of students that hinder their mental and intellectual growth.

According to M.S. Kagan [2], five potentials can be distinguished in the structure of personality:

1. Epistemological potential of personality. It is characterized by the volume and quality of information that a person has. It contains knowledge about the outside world, natural, social, self-knowledge and depends on the natural mind, education, personal experience.
2. Axiological potential of personality. It is determined by the system of value orientations acquired by her in the process of socialization – her ideals, life goals, beliefs and aspirations, as a unity of consciousness of the individual and her self-consciousness.
3. The creative potential of the individual. It is characterized by the acquired and independently developed skills, abilities to act, to work, creative and destructive, productive and reproductive, as well as the measure of their implementation in a particular field of activity.
4. The communicative potential of the individual. It is determined by the measure, forms of her sociability, the nature and strength of contacts with other people, the content of interpersonal communication, expressed in social roles.
5. The artistic potential of the individual. It is determined by the content, intensity of her artistic needs and how she satisfies them.

The degree of personal potential can be influenced by the feeling of loneliness. Because loneliness also manifests itself in positive manifestations. In a negative manifestation, loneliness is associated with conditions such as depression, anxiety and a tendency to conflict in interpersonal relationships, the use of psychoactive substances and alcohol abuse, as well as suicidal tendencies of a person. Therefore, we tried to conduct a differential analysis of students' feelings of loneliness and determine how much this phenomenon affects students' personal potential.

### **Materials and methods**

Within the framework of the neo-Freudian model, the question of loneliness was studied by G. Zilburg, F. Fromm-Reichman, Harry S. Sullivan, F. Fromm; from the point of view of the sociological model - K. Bowman, D. Rismen, R. Slater. The cognitive model is presented by E. Pepla and W. Sadler. Robert S. Weiss is a strong supporter of the interactionist model. V. Derleg and S. Margulis consider the private model in their works. From the point of view of the existential model, the question is studied by K. Mustakas and B. Miyuskovich. The humanistic

model is close to A. Maslow, S. N. Solovyov, N. A. Berdyaev, E.N. Trubetskoy, I. A. Ilyin. The system-wide model was considered by J.Flanders. K. Rogers, D. Bernstein and E.Roy studied the phenomenon of loneliness from the point of view of a phenomenological model [1, pp. 26-57].

The research of Uzbek psychologists E.G.Gaziev, N.G.Kamilova, G.K.Tulaganova, B.M.Umarov, A.B.Sabirova, N.S.Mullabayeva is aimed at studying the psychological features of the phenomenon of loneliness in childhood and adolescence, in which the main attention is paid to the problems of deviant behavior, character accentuation, suicidal behavior of adolescents, self-esteem and self-control [5, p. 7]. The fact that the feeling of loneliness in Uzbekistan has not been studied as a subject of psychological research in the context of other age periods indicates the relevance of the research topic in our country.

The interpretation of approaches in the historical development of world psychology about loneliness as an objectively existing phenomenon, its nature, development and manifestation is sufficiently covered in the sources. Psychodynamic, cognitive, system-wide, interactionist, phenomenological, humanistic, biological, existential approaches to the study of loneliness differ from each other in deep research and theoretical analysis of the problem [5]. The study of the feeling of loneliness in the scientific direction is distinguished by its complexity and fertility. Therefore, its occurrence requires an important methodologically sound stage of the study of external and internal causes, their dependence on the situation, social changes in society.

General aspects of loneliness as a socio-psychological phenomenon have been studied by such well-known psychologists as K.A.Abulkhanova-Slavskaya, S.G.Korchagina, L.I.Starovoitova, G.M.Tikhonov, S.G.Trubnikova, Zh.V.Puzanova, N.E.Pokrovsky, S.A.Vetrov, Yu.M.Shvalb, O.V.Dancheva, I.S.Kohn, O.B.Dolginova, E.V.Filindash, A.U.Kharash. They investigated cultural and historical forms, psychological features of loneliness in adolescence and adolescence [7].

In our republic, the study of the feeling of loneliness of students was given little attention in specific studies. In particular, V.M.Karimova's research on the role of interpersonal communication in personality development analyzes such issues as any loneliness and lack of communication cause a person to feel unbalanced, emotional excitability, self-doubt, fear, anxiety, anxiety. G.B.Shoumarov, N.A.Soginov, U.D.Kodirov, B.M.Umarov, G.K.Tulaganova, G.B.Suleymanova conducted studies aimed primarily at studying mental characteristics in childhood and adolescence, in which the main attention is paid to the influence of feelings of loneliness on the emergence of problems of deviant behavior, character accentuation, suicide, self-assessment and control [4; 6].

Nevertheless, by the XXI century, the phenomenon of loneliness among students and the problem of personal potential, as a subject of special research, had not been studied in Uzbekistan.

In the course of our research, the "Differential Questionnaire of Loneliness experience" by E.N. Osin and D.A.Leontiev was used. 124 students of the Faculty of Pedagogy and Psychology of Ferghana State University took part in the study.

### **The results of the study**

In a pilot study to clarify the causes of the feeling of loneliness among students through a socio-psychological questionnaire. In the course of our experimental study, we compiled a questionnaire. In it, we tried to emphasize the specific aspects of the manifestation of the socio-psychological feeling of loneliness based on the psychological image of students.

To the first question: "What do you mean by the term loneliness?", we received the following responses. It turned out that many respondents understand loneliness as a combination

of physical and spiritual loneliness. In their opinion, the lack of sufficient communication led to the arrival of physical loneliness, in which they emphasized the quantitative aspect of the circle of communication. And spiritual loneliness was associated with the qualitative side of communication, that is, with its emotional and psychological component. Respondents noted that a person can be alone, that is, alone with himself, while he can feel emotionally calm and comfortable. But without being inside people, you can also feel lonely. The feeling of loneliness depends on the categories of human character: an introvert does not feel lonely for a while even in physical isolation, and an extrovert, on the contrary, needs constant communication so that he can keep his loneliness in an adequate figure. According to respondents, having a pleasant companion for the person himself will help to forgive feelings of loneliness. 1st year students noted that loneliness is a physical inhibition. 3rd year students claim that in modern society, which is now full of global changes, the perception of loneliness takes longer because young people act as an object of constant communication, and even the perception of inner emptiness is rejected. Even without a loved one, a person is influenced by constant movement, which makes loneliness far from our life. It can be concluded that a deeper understanding of social life, its peculiarities, personal identification and reflection of 3rd-year students in relation to 1st-year students allows us to see in them the orientation of the phenomenon of loneliness to positivity. A freshman acquiring the status of a student in existence in the imagination causes some difficulties and personal identification is carried out in an unambiguous way.

The next question is “What helps to overcome the feeling of loneliness?” Social and personal determinants were identified from the answers to this question. Personal determinants included confidence in the future, pleasant impressions of others, sincerity in communication, openness to news, etc. The 3rd year students also emphasized the place of personal will and determination in solitude. And the 1st-year students relied mainly on sincerity when entering into communication with other people. As social determinants, all methods of social influence supported by friends and family, professional maturity within their specialty, hobbies, tourism, that is, distracting human activities were introduced. All respondents put family first. In fact, being a family member, knowing the individual psychological characteristics of each family member, they are able to effectively influence it. The 3rd year students replied that solving problems together with their peers is also considered an important determining factor.

“What prevents you from overcoming loneliness?” It also includes feelings, character traits, the occurrence of difficulties when entering with strangers, shyness, inability to communicate, phobias among the personal determinants. Third-year students noted that when perceiving loneliness, it is important to understand its positivity. And the first-year students stated that loneliness affects introverts even more severely and prevents them from overcoming this feeling. The social determinants are a sharp increase in the informatization of society, social status, lifestyle, negative attitude of surrounding people, place of residence, incorrect perception of loneliness in the environment, etc. In modern society, the transfer of the main time of students in social networks leads to the artificiality of communication. As a result, the indicator of emotional acceptance of the interlocutor emotionally decreases, and the tendency to loneliness increases. The predominance of subjective conclusions in the relationships of young people also causes a feeling of loneliness, narrowing the circle of communication in them.

“What, in your opinion, are the reasons for the manifestation of feelings of loneliness among students?” Answering this question, respondents confidently relied on personal life experience. The reasons were interpreted as personal and social manifestations. That is, high visibility of individualism, risk of rejection, self-esteem, personal shortcomings, variability of the

value system, limitations. These reasons arise in connection with psychological imbalances, widespread blockade, upbringing, etc. Among the social reasons are the lack of life experience, fragility of people, informatization of society, inability to spend their free time satisfactorily, loss of tolerance. Although 1st year students often say that unfulfilled expectations create difficulties in real life, and this condition tends to loneliness, 3rd year students also claim that loneliness helps in such a situation. In young people, increasing independence, strengthening their social status and clearly expressing aspirations lead to a positive perception of loneliness. As a result, it was noted that they would use loneliness as an opportunity for self-expression. The 1st year students emphasized that they should move away from each other, considering that the transition of communication into an interactive form is formed as a new social group. It was also noted that the incomprehensibility of strangers creates a basis for loneliness for them.

“Name the methods to overcome loneliness.” Of course, during the conversation, feedback was given on solving this problem. Their difference is that in the 3rd year, students noted that it is not necessary to overcome this phenomenon, but it is necessary to use it wisely if the process of self-awareness of a person and the identification of loneliness are adequate. At the same time, the importance of such features as the right way of communication, the need for personal growth, the manifestation of perseverance in self-improvement was noted. The opinion of the 1st year students was in a different direction, they expressed the need to focus on the perception of shortcomings and phobias at the stage of transition to student status. It was also noted that in the 1st year it is advisable to carry out, on the basis of the principles of morality, the characteristics of the expression of emotional experiences inherent in a person of spirituality in all directions.

The question of which statistical criterion to analyze the progress of students according to the methodology led to the verification of the compliance of the respondents' results with the normal distribution.

**Table 1**

**The results of the correspondence of the data on the normal distribution of the “Differential questionnaire of loneliness experience”**

Scales	min.	max.	average value	standard deviation	z	p
Total loneliness	15,00	46,00	25,30	6,245	2,783	0,000
Dependence on communication	24,00	54,00	37,44	6,91	1,873	0,002
Positive loneliness	16,00	37,00	28,11	5,28	2,676	0,000

Note: \*\*\* $p < 0,001$

It was found that the results of the scales “General loneliness” ( $Z=2.783$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), “Dependence on communication” ( $Z=24.00$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), “Positive loneliness” ( $Z=2.676$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) do not correspond to the law of normal distribution. Based on this, at the next stages of the study of the scale of the “Differential Questionnaire of Loneliness experience”, an analysis based on nonparametric criteria should be carried out. To do this, we conducted a statistical analysis of the results by the Mann-Whitney criterion and a correlation analysis by Spearman.

**Table 2**

**Correlation of scales of the method**

**“Differential questionnaire of loneliness experience”**

Scales	General loneliness			Dependence on communication			Positive loneliness		
	General value	The 1st course	The 3rd course	General value	The 1st course	The 3rd course	General value	The 1st course	The 3rd course
General loneliness	1	1	1	-0,128**	-0,175*	-0,147*	0,262**	0,109	0,264**
Dependence on communication				1	1	1	-0,226**	-0,155*	-0,401**
Positive loneliness							1	1	1

Note: \* $p < 0,05$ ; \*\* $p < 0,01$

Dependence on communication has an inverse correlation with the scale of positive loneliness ( $r = -0,226$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ). The results show that due to the growing desire to avoid loneliness, students have an unpleasant and painful attitude towards it, as a result they cannot show positive emotions associated with loneliness, they will not be able to find positive solutions to the problem of loneliness. Inverse correlation between the scales of general loneliness and dependence on communication in the first-year students ( $r = -0,175$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ) there is a feeling of isolation from others, a lack of ability to communicate with people, a feeling of loneliness leads to a lack of tolerance for lonely people and situations. And the inverse correlation between the scales of dependence on communication and positive loneliness ( $r = -0,155$ ;  $n < 0,05$ ) in the first-year students means the inability to show positive emotions associated with loneliness, to find positive opportunities in loneliness due to the fact that they avoid the situation of loneliness, perceive loneliness as an unpleasant and painful experience.

The scale of general loneliness and dependence on communication among the third-year students has an inverse correlation ( $r = -0,148$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ). According to the results, the increased propensity of students to a general sense of loneliness reduces their sense of dependence in communication. The lack of warm interpersonal relationships, the inability to establish contact with other people, an increased sense of loneliness give rise to indifference to communication. In addition, an increase in the overall feeling of loneliness, in turn, causes an increase in positive loneliness ( $r = 0,264$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ). The lack of warm interpersonal relationships among students, the inability to bring people closer to themselves, shows that in conditions of loneliness, due to increased isolation from others, they cannot use loneliness for positive purposes. The scale of dependence on communication and positive loneliness in the third-year students has an inverse correlation ( $r = -0,401$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ). This shows that students, showing dependence on communication, do not identify loneliness as a positive feeling.

### Conclusion

Based on the results of the empirical study, the following conclusions were made:

Firstly, the first-year students feel an unpleasant and painful attitude towards loneliness, as a result they cannot show positive emotions associated with loneliness, they will not be able to find positive solutions to the problem of loneliness. This negatively affects the personal potential of the first-year student.

Secondly, the third-year students have an increased tendency to a general feeling of loneliness. But at the same time, an increase in their general feeling of loneliness causes an increase in positive loneliness. This is due to the fact that they have experience gained at the training stage. The third-year students, finding positivity in solitude, retain internal physical and spiritual energy, optimality in educational activities aimed at creative self-expression and self-realization. This indicates the positive influence of loneliness on the personal potential of the third-year students.

Thirdly, the presence of painful attitudes to loneliness among the first-year students requires the effective introduction of modern psychotherapeutic and psychocorrective measures.

Based on the empirical data obtained, the following recommendations for students have been developed:

1. It is important to emphasize that students should live in the present, in which it is necessary to teach them to understand the system of personal potentials.
2. It is necessary to instill in students an understanding of the difference between positive and negative loneliness. It is necessary to establish effective use of positive loneliness.
4. It is necessary to clarify the students' life goal, which strengthens the desire to always be active.

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