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## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LONELINESS, SOCIAL SATISFACTION AND SELF-ESTEEM

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### **Abstract**

*The study is focused to evidence the relationship between the variables: loneliness, social satisfaction and self-esteem. The correlation hypotheses assume that there are statistically significant bivariate correlations between the variables: loneliness, social satisfaction and self-esteem.*

*Method: The participants were 31 people, age between 21 and 62 years old, both females and males, different occupations. The instruments were: The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), De Jong Isolation and Loneliness scale- Long version (De Jong-Gierveld & Kamphuis, 1985; De Jong-Gierveld & Tilburg, 1999) and 6 items version of the Duke Social Support Index (Koenig et al., 1993). The procedure respected the ethics in research conditions and the GDPR. The independent variable for the prediction models was the social support. The dependent variables were the perception of isolation and the self-esteem.*

*The results confirm partially the correlation hypotheses and the prediction hypotheses.*

*Further studies should investigate relationship between the social support, isolation and well-being, satisfaction with life, work engagement, anxiety, depression, stress.*

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**Keywords:** Social support, self-esteem, isolation and loneliness.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Bagley, Bolitho, & Bertrand (1997) conducted a study with 1,084 males and 1,024 females using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. They analyzed the construct validity from correlations with behavior problem categories, measure of family relationships and measures of school climate. The authors proposed the use of self-esteem measures in school counselling.

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Martín-Albo, Núñez, Navarro and Grijalvo (2007) were interested to translate and validate the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. The participants were 420 university students. The authors used the confirmatory factor analysis that revealed the model that best fit the data. The use of the study is in the higher education field.

Tomas and Olivier (1999) were interested to evidence the existence of a global self-esteem factor underlying responses to the scale.

Jackson (2020) was interested to evidence the validity and reliability for the Rosenberg self-esteem scale in his dissertation thesis. The author evidenced that a unidimensional model fit the data. Also, the author evidenced the convergent and discriminant validity.

Gierveld & van Tilburg (2006) conducted a study applying the 6-Item De Jong Loneliness scale. The authors highlighted that loneliness is an indicator for well-being.

Szcześniak, Bielecka, Madej, Pieńkowska, Rodzeń (2020) were interested to highlight the mediator Role of Self-Esteem Between the variables Loneliness and Life Satisfaction. The results evidenced that the variable loneliness correlated negatively with the variables self-esteem and life satisfaction. Hence, the variable Self-esteem was associated positively with the variable life satisfaction.

Cosmoiu and Rizeanu (2020) conducted a study which highlighted the relationship of core self-evaluation traits: self-efficacy, locus of control and self-esteem with academic achievement.

Wardian, Robbins, Wolfersteig, Johnson & Dustman (2013) conducted a validation study for Duke Social Support Index with 10 items version. The study was completed and the Confirmatory Factor Analysis confirmed the factors structure by gender, ethnicity, and age and for the total population (Wardian et al. 2013). Regarding the relationship between the Social Support and Suicide, Pan, et al. (2020) investigated the psychometric characteristics of Duke Social Support Index related to suicide. George, Blazer, Hughes & Fowler (1989) related the social support with the major depression. The authors find out that social network and subjective social support are predictors of depressive symptoms.

Zhao, Kong & Wang (2013) conducted a study regarding the “role of social support and self-esteem in the relationship between shyness and loneliness”. The authors revealed that between shyness and loneliness it was a partial mediated effect by the variables social support and self-esteem.

## **2. OBJECTIVE AND HYPOTHESES**

### **2.1. OBJECTIVE**

The objectives of the research:

1. To highlight possible correlations between the variables self-esteem, loneliness, and social support.
2. To evidence that social support predicts the self-esteem.
3. To highlight that social support negatively predicts the perception of loneliness and isolation.

## 2.2. HYPOTHESES

The research hypotheses are the followings:

-Hypotheses for the bivariate correlation

1. There is a positive statistically significant correlation between Self-esteem and social support.
2. There is a negative statistically significant correlation between the Social support and Isolation.
3. There is a negative correlation between isolation and self-esteem.

-Hypotheses tested with linear regression model

4. Social support positively predicts the self-esteem.
5. Social support negatively predicts the isolation.

## 3. METHOD

### 3.1. The participants

The participants were a group of approximately 31 people aged between 20 and 62 ( $M=40.71$ ;  $S.D.=11.57$ ), both females and males from different professional backgrounds. They responded by filling out a Google docs document form between January and February 2021.

### 3.2. The instruments

1. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) is a tool for assessing self-esteem, used in the psychiatric clinical field as well as in psychology. Rosenberg constructed a 10-item scale to which subjects can respond by choosing one of four answer options: "true," "rarely true," "sometimes true," "false."

The global level of self-esteem influences the choices in the lives of individuals as well as their existential style. To calculate the score, the indications for questions number 1, 3, 4, 7, 10 are used, where the answers given by the subjects are rated with four points for the "true" variant, the following three answers being rated with 3 points "rarely true", 2 points "Sometimes true" and 1 point "false". The

internal consistency was .77 and the Coefficient of Reproducibility was at least .90 (Rosenberg, 1965). The Cronbach alpha coefficients ranging from .85 to .96 in studies according to Jackson (2020) in his dissertation thesis. The scale was applied for the present study from 1-very low to 5-very high.

2. De Jong Isolation and Lonliness scale-Long version (De Jong-Gierveld & Kamphuis, 1985; De Jong-Gierveld & Tilburg, 1999). For this research was used the long version with 11 items. The reliability of the scale was  $\alpha = .84$  (Gierveld & van Tilburg, 2006; page 585). The items were applied for the present study on a scale from 1-very low to 5-very high.

3. Duke Social Support Index (Koenig et al., 1993). For the present study was used the 6 items extracted from the 10 items form (Wardian et al., 2013; page 101). The items were applied on a scale from 1-very low to 7-very high.

### 3.3. Procedure

The instruments were applied on-line using document Google-docs. The Ethical code and GDPR legislation were respected.

The participants were informed about the research consent and also about the anonymous identity.

### 3.4. The design

The variables for the regression models were the followings:

- Independent variables: social support.
- Dependent variables: isolation and self-esteem.

## 4. RESULTS

In table 1 can be seen the Mean and Standard Deviation for the variables: Isolation, Social support and Self-esteem.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics

variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Isolation	27.09	6.399
Social support	34.22	6.020
Self-esteem	58.77	7.881
N	31	

In the table two can be observed the bivariate correlation coefficients for the variables: Isolation, Social support, and Self-esteem.

Table 2. Correlations

		Isolation	Social support	Self-esteem
Isolation	Pearson Correlation	1	-.526**	-.329
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002	.070
	N	31	31	31
Social support	Pearson Correlation	-.526**	1	.496**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002		.005
	N	31	31	31
Self-esteem	Pearson Correlation	-.329	.496**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.070	.005	
	N	31	31	31

In the table 2 can be seen that there is statistically significant positive correlation between the variables: Self-esteem and social support ( $r=.496$ ;  $p<.001$ ).

There is a statistically significant negative correlation between the Social support and Isolation ( $r=-.526$ ;  $p<.01$ ).

Testing the correlation hypotheses, were confirmed the following two:

- There is a positive statistically significant correlation between Self-esteem and social support.
- There is a negative statistically significant correlation between the Social support and Isolation.

The other correlation hypotheses were not confirmed ( $p>.05$ ).

The hypotheses regarding the predictive models were tested using the simple linear regression model.

In table 3 can be see the R and R Square values for the first prediction model corresponding to the hypothesis “Social support predict the isolation”

Table 3. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.526a	.276	.251	5.53710

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Social support  
b. Dependent Variable: Isolation

Analyzing the Unstandardized Coefficients and the statistically significance of the predictor Social support for the regression model the hypothesis has been confirmed (table 4).

Table 4. Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	46.223	5.832		7.925	.000
	Social support	-.559	.168	-.526	-3.328	.002

The regression equation is the following:

$$\text{Isolation} = 46.223 - .559 * \text{Social support}$$

Testing hypothesis “Social support predicts self-esteem”

The hypothesis was tested with the linear regression procedure (Tables 5 and 6).

Table 5. Model Summary<sup>b</sup>

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.496	.246	.220	6.958

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Social support  
b. Dependent Variable: Self-esteem

In the table 6 can be observed the Constant and the Standardized Coefficients for the regression model.

Table 6. – Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

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Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	36.535	7.330		4.984	.000
	Social support	.650	.211	.496	3.079	.005

The regression equation is the following:

$$\text{Self-esteem} = 36.535 + .650 * \text{Social support}$$

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions highlight that from the bivariate correlation hypotheses only two were confirmed: there is statistically significant positive correlation between the variables Self-esteem and social support ( $r=.496$ ;  $p<.001$ ) and there is a statistically significant negative correlation between the Social support and Isolation ( $r=-.526$ ;  $p<.01$ ).

Regarding the prediction models, the hypotheses were confirmed for  $p<.05$ . In this way the study evidenced that the social support predicts positively the self-esteem and negatively the isolation. The findings are supported by the scientific literature presented in the introduction.

According to the results and the previous studies, social support plays a major role in increasing the self-esteem and reducing the social isolation and the perception of loneliness. Family and friends represent as Duke Index Social Support mention the main support for strong self esteem and reduced perception of loneliness and isolation.

Further studies should focus on relating the social support and loneliness and isolation with other variables: well-being, happiness, positive and negative emotions, anxiety, depression, work involvement.

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