

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND LONELINESS

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This article deals with the issue of interrelation between emotional intelligence and loneliness. Loneliness is one of the most pressing problems of modern society. This is not only a complex phenomenon of individual human life, but also an important social phenomenon, requiring deep psychological, social and philosophical reflection. The scientific-theoretical relevance of addressing the problem of loneliness in modern society is associated with an ambiguous interpretation of the changes taking place in it, and, consequently, the attitudes that a person should have in his life.

Introduction. In the history of philosophical and psychological thought, the phenomenon of loneliness is treated ambiguously. Most researchers of loneliness associate it with sharply negative emotional experiences, destructively influencing a person. There are many definitions of loneliness. Loneliness is considered as a subjective mental state that reflects a person's psychophysical status, making it difficult for him to start new ones and maintain old contacts and connections [1].

The existing contradiction in assessing the nature of the influence of loneliness on human life is expressed in two ways, on the one hand, it is understood as destructive for the individual, on the other - it is considered as an indispensable stage of self-knowledge and self-determination. The reasons for this sharp divergence of views are, first, insufficient knowledge of phenomenology and psychological mechanisms of loneliness.

Demographic literature gives statistical data on the absolute number and proportion of single people. So, in a number of developed countries of the world (Holland, Belgium, etc.), single people make up about 30% of the population. In the United States, according to the data for 2000, there were 28.6 million single people [4]. Approximately 42.6 million adults over the age of 45 in the United States are estimated to be suffering from chronic loneliness, according to AARP's Loneliness Study [6]. In addition, the most recent U.S. census data shows more than a quarter of the population lives alone, more than half of the population is unmarried and, since the previous census, marriage rates and the number of children per household have declined [7].

Belarus census data of 2009 showed that there were 3.516 million single people in the country.

The All-Russian Center for the Study of Public Opinion presented data for 2010. Most Russians record an increase in the number of single people in their place of residence (48%). First, this opinion is typical for residents of large cities (55%) [4].

Main part. The human protest against loneliness became the general theme of many humanistic teachings that arose in the West in the 20th century. The greatest attention to loneliness was paid by the existentialists N.A. Berdyaev, M. Buber, A. Camus, J.-P. Sartre, M. Heidegger, K. Jaspers. The loneliness of the personality was seen as the realization of the principle of a closed anthropological universe, according to which the inner isolation of a man is the basis of any individual being [1].

K. Horney considered loneliness a consequence of the negative manifestation of the ideology of market relations, the competitiveness between men. V. Frankle believed that a person fell into a state of loneliness, losing certain values and the meaning of life [2].

Sociologists and social psychologists, and even publicists and journalists have unveiled the loneliness of the elderly, the loneliness of old age, which has assumed alarming proportions in our country. Soon teenagers and young people were included in the zone of social risk caused by social isolation. I. Kon and R. Nemov, independently of each other considering the issues of youth psychology, described some of the reactions of the individuals and their environment to loneliness, attempted to determine its causes [1;2].

Actual and perceived social isolation are both associated with increased risk for early mortality [6]. The researchers conducted a literature search of studies (January 1980 to February 2014) using MEDLINE, CINAHL, PsycINFO, Social Work Abstracts, and Google Scholar. The included studies provided quantitative data on mortality as affected by loneliness, social isolation, or living alone. They found no differences between measures of objective and subjective social isolation. Overall, the influence of both objective and subjective social isolation on risk for mortality is comparable with well-established risk factors for mortality [6].

In our research, we assumed that there would be interrelation between loneliness and emotional intelligence in teenagers.

D. Lyusin defined emotional intelligence as the ability to understand and manage one's own emotions and emotions of other people, the ability can be directed at one's own emotions and the emotions of other people [3; 5].

In our study, 38 teenagers (22 girls and 16 boys) from 14 to 17 years old took part. According to Erik Eriksson, they represent the adolescent stage.

The study was conducted at secondary school No. 14 in Novopolotsk. The study involved schoolchildren of the tenth and eleventh grades.

In order to study emotional intelligence, we used a questionnaire authored by D. Lyusin [3]. This questionnaire contains 10 scales: scale "interpersonal EI" - an ability to understand other people's emotions and manage them; scale "intrapersonal EI" - an ability to understand and manage their own emotions; scale "understanding of emotions" - an ability to understand their own and others' emotions; scale "emotion management" - an ability to manage their own and emotions of other people; subscale "understanding of other people's emotions" - an ability to understand the emotional state of a person on the basis of external manifestations of emotions (facial expressions, gestures, sounding of the voice) and / or intuitively; sensitivity to the inner states of other people and some other scales.

To study loneliness, UCLA Loneliness Scale was used, a questionnaire developed by D. Russell, L.A. Peplau, M.L. Ferguson. The purpose of the questionnaire is to determine the level of loneliness and social isolation of a person. The diagnostic questionnaire "Loneliness" was developed by S.G. Korchagina, which is designed to measure the level of loneliness experienced by a person at a given moment in his life.

Analyzing the results of emotional intelligence we received the following results. We can see the results of the questionnaire "Emotional Intelligence"(by D. Lyusin) in Fig.1.

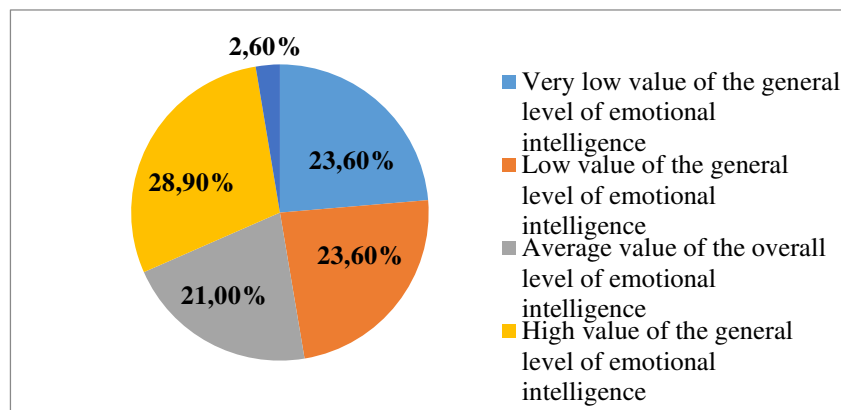


Fig. 1. The data of the emotional intelligence

The high value of the general level of emotional intelligence is 28.9% corresponds with 72.2% of slight experience of possible loneliness (The questionnaire "Loneliness" by S.G. Korchagina) and with 72.2% of low level of loneliness (UCLA Loneliness Scale).

We can see the results of the questionnaire "Loneliness"(by S.G. Korchagina) in Fig.2.

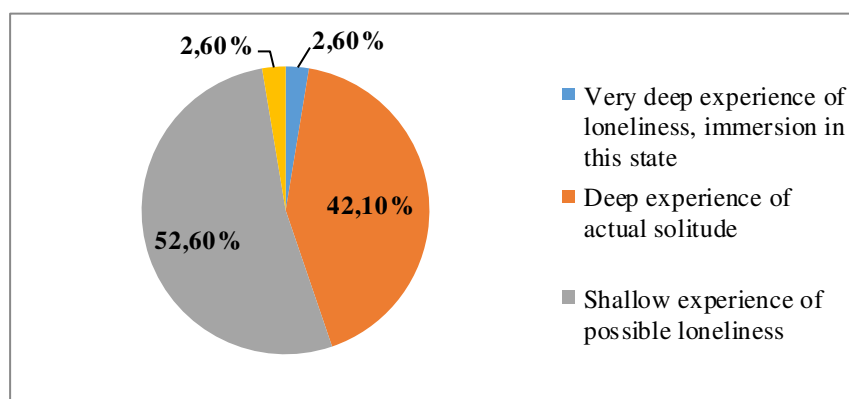


Fig. 2. The data of the levels of loneliness

The next indicator is a low value of general level of emotional intelligence (23.6% of the teenagers), it corresponds to a greater extent of deep experience of actual solitude (55.5% of the teenagers) (The questionnaire "Loneliness" by S.G. Korchagina), and an average level of loneliness (44.4% of the teenagers) and a low level of loneliness 44,4% (UCLA Loneliness Scale).

We can see the results of UCLA Loneliness Scale in Fig.3.

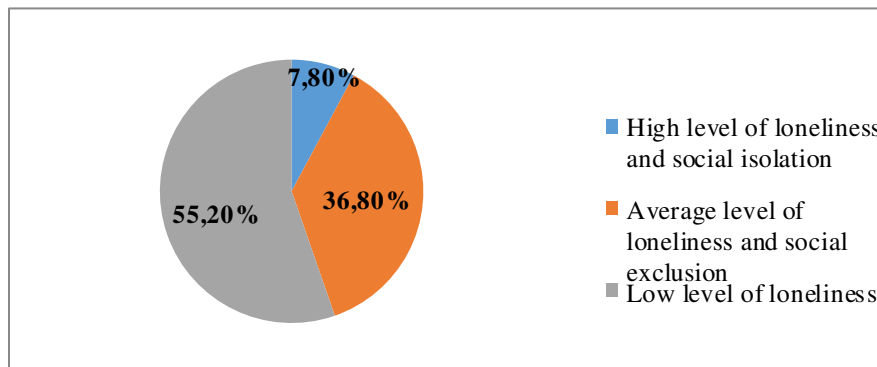


Fig. 3. The data of the levels of loneliness and social isolation

The next indicator is a very low value of the overall level of emotional intelligence (23,6% of the teenagers). The teenagers with low level of emotional intelligence are more likely to have a slight experience of possible loneliness (55.5% of the teenagers) (The questionnaire "Loneliness" by S. G. Korchagina) , low and average level of loneliness (44,4% of the teenagers) (UCLA Loneliness Scale).

The next indicator is an average value of the overall level of emotional intelligence (21,0% of the teenagers), the teenagers are more likely to have a deep experience of actual loneliness (20,0% of the teenagers) (The questionnaire "Loneliness" S. G. Korchagina) and low level of loneliness(20,0% of the teenagers) (UCLA Loneliness Scale).

Conclusion. There is no precise definition of the very concept and nature of "loneliness", since the phenomenological and psychological mechanism of loneliness has not been sufficiently studied. Emotional intelligence has not been sufficiently studied either, which gives the prospect of studying these phenomena.

Based on the obtained empirical data, we can argue that with a high value of the overall level of emotional intelligence there is a tendency to feel a slight experience of possible loneliness and to have a low level of loneliness. With a low value of the overall level of emotional intelligence, there is a tendency to a deep experience of actual loneliness and the existence of an average and low level of loneliness. In the case of a very low value of the general level of emotional intelligence, there is a tendency to a slight experience of possible loneliness and the existence of a low and average level of loneliness.

Schoolchildren with an average value of the general level of emotional intelligence can equally feel a deep experience of actual loneliness and have a low level of loneliness. Since there is a small interconnection between the high value of the overall emotional level and the feeling of a slight experience of possible loneliness, as well as the low value of the overall level of emotional intelligence and the profound experience of actual loneliness, there are prospects in further studying the connection between loneliness and emotional intelligence. It is possible to work with a more extended sample and age group.

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