Social Support, Loneliness and Emotion Regulation among Young Adolescents Living in Hostels

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Abstract
This study examined the relationships between social support, Loneliness and emotional regulation among young adolescents living in hostels. A correlational research design was used in the research, with a total sample size of N=100 adolescents living in hostels (n=15) girls and (n=75) boys. Purposive sampling was used to gather data from different hostels. Standardized self-report instruments including the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), UCLA Loneliness Scale and the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire were used. Pearson correlational coefficient, simple linear regression and t- test were used to test the hypothesis. The results showed that social support was significantly and negatively correlated with loneliness. A significant positive correlation was also found between social supports and emotion regulation. Furthermore, simple linear regression analysis showed that social supports predicted 9% of the variance in loneliness. While it accounted 7% of the variance in emotion regulations. However independent-sample t-test showed that girls expressing more emotional control and social support than boys. The results imply that social support is essential for lowering feelings of loneliness and improving emotional control in adolescents living in hostels. It also acts as a buffer against the difficulties associated with social adjustment and family separation. In order to

promote adolescents psychological well-being, the study underscores the value of organized support networks in hostel settings and the practical ramifications for educators, hostel managers, and mental health professionals.
Keywords: *social support, loneliness, emotional regulation, adolescents, hostel living*

Introduction

In modern culture, parents send their adolescents to hostels in order to give them a better education and prepare them for a bright future. These kids so frequently require various kind of assistance there. Such children may experience a variety of challenges. A lot of social support is necessary for young teenagers living in dorms to cope with the challenges of transitioning into adulthood. Lack of this assistance increases the likelihood that these adolescents may feel lonely, which may lead to actions that are detrimental to society, their families, and themselves. Insufficient social support may also cause individuals to struggle with emotional regulations and loneliness.

Social support encompasses the practical, emotional, and informational aid given by friends, family, healthcare experts, and extensive social networks (Kisomi et al., 2024). It's not only about the aid that is given; it's also about how people feel about how available that help is and how happy they are with it. This shows both the amount and quality of help they got (Haber et al., 2007).

In the social sciences, loneliness is described as a stressful and unwanted experience that results from a perceived gap between an individual's desired and real social interactions, resulting in a subjective sensation of unfulfilled social needs (Santini et al., 2025).

The process by which people consciously or unconsciously control or modify their emotional dynamics in order to satisfy demands from their surroundings is known as emotion regulation (Aldao & Nolen-Hoeksema, 2010).

The relationships between social support and loneliness. A meta-analysis and review modern loneliness is on the rise and has had a serious detrimental impact on mental health. One significant predictor of loneliness is social support. However, research on the relationship between loneliness and social support has shown a wide range of correlation sizes. This meta-analysis's goal is to ascertain how loneliness and social support are related. The study found 177 articles (N = 113,427) and employed robust variance estimation with random effects. Relationship between loneliness and social support. In particular, in Chinese samples, the effect of perceived social support (r = -0.45) on loneliness is greater than that of other social supports (r = -0.36), the relationship between loneliness and social support is lower in rural populations than in urban ones, and friend support (r = -0.48) was more significant in lowering loneliness than two other supports (family support: r = -0.34; significant other support: r = -0.40). Future research and loneliness treatments may be impacted by the current findings, which highlight the significant role that social support plays in lowering loneliness levels and support strong relationships between social support and loneliness (Zang & Dong, 2022).

Maladaptive Thinking Styles and Suicide Cognitions: Serial Mediation of Difficulties in Emotion Regulation and Loneliness. The goal of this study is to examine how maladaptive thought patterns, through the serial mediation roles of loneliness and emotion regulation issues, contribute to suicidal thoughts. There are 617 university students in the sample (of which 77.6% are female; Mage = 20.511, SD = 2.307). According to the correlation study, issues with emotion

regulation, loneliness, and suicidal thoughts were all positively correlated with maladaptive thought patterns. The process macro (Model 6) was used to do serial mediation analysis, which showed that the association between maladaptive thinking styles and suicide cognition is serially mediated by issues with emotion regulation and loneliness. The findings have applications in creating intervention plans that address loneliness and emotion control in order to lower the risk of suicide among college students. In the context of the literature, the study findings are examined and analyzed (Akbulut et al., 2025).

Unravelling the complexity of the relationship between social support sources and loneliness: A mixed-methods study with older adults". This study examined the function that social support networks play in the experience of social and emotional loneliness, identifying seven support networks that are divided between non-family (friends, neighbors) and family (spouse/partner, children, grandchildren, and siblings). The study population included individuals 65 years of age and older who were living alone, in a nursing home, with a partner (but not with children), or both in Spain. Using a mixed-methods approach, data from 30 older individuals' semi-structured interviews (qualitative phase) and a survey with 887 participants (quantitative phase) were combined. Both study phases' results point to distinct association dynamics between social support sources and the emotional and social aspects of loneliness. People who received support from their spouse, kids, grandchildren, siblings, and friends reported feeling less emotionally alone. Support from the following sources was linked to lower levels of social loneliness: friends, siblings, spouses, and grandkids. On the other hand, higher levels of social loneliness were linked to support from children, while higher levels of emotional loneliness were linked to support from neighbors. The results of this study help to clarify the relationship between social support and loneliness and imply that by taking into account the distinct impacts of support from various sources, interventions meant to lessen loneliness could be more precisely targeted (Sánchez-Moreno et al., 2025).

Postpartum Mothers' Mental Health in a Conflict-Affected Region: A Cross-Sectional Study of Emotion Regulation and Social Support". Maternal mental health is greatly impacted by the pregnancy, delivery, and postpartum transitions, which have an effect on the wellbeing of the individual and the family. Although emotion control and social support are generally protective characteristics, little is known about their function and effects during times of conflict. During a time of tension in Israel, we performed a cross-sectional study on 400 Jewish women from a representative sample up to two years postpartum. The Sekernet platform, an online survey instrument that has been certified in Israel, was used to recruit participants. Jewish women between the ages of 18 and 45 who were up to two years postpartum and without a history of mental illnesses that have been diagnosed. Moms between the ages of 18 and 45 and within two years after giving birth were eligible for inclusion, however moms under the age of 18, over 45, more than two years after giving birth, or with a history of a confirmed mental disorder or mental health conditions. We evaluated psychological well-being (PWB), anxiety (GAD-7), perceived stress (PSS), resilience (CD-RISC), emotion regulation techniques (ERQ), quality of life (WHO-5), social support (MSPSS), and post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms of(PCL-5) using standardized test tools. Additionally, self-reported questionnaires assessing the frequency and kind of exposure throughout the conflict period were used to determine direct exposure to war events and exposure to media linked to the conflict. While expressive suppression and overall stress had a negative correlation with psychological well-being and quality of life ($p < 0.01$),

cognitive reappraisal and resilience had a positive correlation with psychological well-being ($p < 0.01$). Social support significantly mediated the effects of stress on psychological well-being ($\beta = -0.060$; $p < 0.05$) and quality of life ($\beta = -0.05$; $p < 0.05$), according to mediation analysis. Additionally, there was a correlation between lower well-being and higher anxiety and media exposure associated to conflicts and symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (Mor et al., 2025).

Connection Loneliness and Emotion Regulation with Quarter Life Crisis in Adolescents in Gresik". It is common to describe teenagers as change agents, but they also undoubtedly have their own demands and challenges. Thus, those who have attained adulthood need to be prepared to deal with society. Instability, mistrust, fear of failure, loneliness, constant change, having many options, and fear of impotence can all cause people to experience a quarter life crisis, which is a negative reaction or emotional crisis that occurs when they feel incapable of handling the changes and challenges that come up. The purpose of this study is to identify the connection between the quarter life crisis (Y) in Gresik adolescents and loneliness (X1) and emotion regulation (X2). This study uses a cross-sectional methodology and is quantitative in nature. This is carried out in order to test a preconceived notion. Because this study is cross-sectional, information on the independent and dependent variables is gathered and examined just once. 215 students from Muhammadiyah University of Gresik's Faculty of Health participated in the study, which involved 468 populations. The sample was chosen at random. Loneliness and emotion control in regard to quarter life crisis are unrelated. Additionally, the statistical examination of the link between quarter life crisis and emotion regulation yielded no p-value results; instead, a p-value of 0.5 (>0.05) indicated that loneliness and quarter life crisis are unrelated (Saputro & Widiyawati, 2025).

Two theoretical frameworks provide useful insight into the psychological mechanisms relating to social supports, loneliness and emotional regulation among adolescents living in hostels. According to Bowlby (1979), children are naturally motivated to develop attachments in order to survive, and they will use behaviors like weeping and clutching to keep their parents close. He proposed the concept of a "secure base," in which a parents offers security while promoting curiosity. Later, it was determined that there are four types of attachment: disorganized, ambivalent/resistant, avoidant, and secure.

Weiss (1974) distinguished between primary (emotional) and secondary (professional) links and emphasized the importance of social interactions for psychological well-being. He listed six social elements that might lead to loneliness, low self-esteem, and a bad quality of life: attachment, social integration, nurturing, and reinforcement of value, direction, and dependable partnership.

Rationale of the Study

Adolescence is a vital developmental stage characterized by emotional and social upheavals, which are especially difficult for adolescents living away from home in hostels. While hostel living might foster independence, it can also exacerbate loneliness and emotional distress when social support is absent. Limited study has focused on the combined function of social support, loneliness, and emotional regulation in hostel-dwelling teenagers. This study seeks to address this gap by investigating these links in a culturally appropriate setting.

Objectives of the Study

- To find out the relationship of social support and loneliness among young adolescents living in hostels.

- To examine the gender differences in social support among young adolescents living in hostels.

Hypothesis

- Social support is likely to have a significant negative impact on the loneliness of young adolescents living in hostels.
- Social support is likely to have positively impact on emotional regulation of young adolescents living in hostels.
- Females adolescents living in hostels are likely to have more social supports then male adolescents living in hostels

Research Methodology

The study used the correlational research design to examine the effect of social support on loneliness and emotion regulation among adolescents living in hostels .The sample of this study consist of 100 participants.Purposive sampling technique was used to collect data from participants (N = 100). The participants were boys and girls of age (11- 16 years). For inclusion, those adolescents were included in the study currently living in hostels. Those were included who were enrolled in school or educational institution. For exclusion, adolescents below 11 or above 16 were excluded from study and the adolescents students who were day scholar were excluded from study. Demographical variable gender, age, residence, family system, socio-economic status were also measured. The data was collected from different hostels' students.

Table 1

Socio-Demographic characteristics of participants

Characteristics		*N*	*%*
Gender			
	Male	75	75.0
	Female	25	25.0
Age			
	11-14	65	65.0
	14-16	35	35.0
Education			
	Secondary level	54	54.0
	Intermediate	46	46.0
Socioeconomic status	Lower class	7	7.1
	Middle class	88	88.8
	Upper class	5	5.1
Residence			
	Rural	20	20.0
	Urban	80	80.0

Table 1 revealed that the socio-demographic characteristics of adolescents' living in hostels (n = 100). The majority of the participants (75%) were adolescents male, with 25% were female. Most of the participants were between the ages of 11- 14 (65%), followed by 14-16 (35%). In terms of economic standing, 88% of participants belonged to the middle class, 7% to the lower class, and 5% to the upper class. In terms of education, 54% were secondary level, 46% were intermediate. The rural participants were (20%), while urban were 80%.

Instruments

Social Support

Zimet et al. (1988) developed the multidimensional scale of perceived social support. The scale used to measured social support on 7- points' likert scale and consist of 12 items. The 7-point ranged 1 =Very strongly disagree,2=Strongly disagree,3=Mildly disagree,4=Neutral,5=Mildly agree,6=Strongly agree,7=Very strongly agree. Cronbach's alpha coefficient is (0.81).

Loneliness

Danial et al. (1978) developed UCLA loneliness scale (Version- 3. 1996). The scale used to measured loneliness on 4-points likert scale, consist of 20 items. The 4-points ranged 1=Never, 2=rarely, 3=Sometime, 4=Always. Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.87. Higher score indicate greater degree of loneliness.

Emotion Regulation

Emotion regulation questionnaire (Gross & John, 2003). The scale consist of 10- items. The scale used to measured emotional regulation on 7- points like scale range 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Slightly Disagree, 4=Neutral, 5=Slightly Agree, 6= Agree, 7= Strongly Agree. Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.79.

Data Collection Strategy

A purposive sampling technique was used to collect data from young adolescent living in hostels. Standardized and validated self- report questionnaire were selected to measure social support, loneliness and emotional regulation. The questionnaire were distributed online via Google form to ensure accessibility and convenience for respondents. Before data collection a pilot study was conducted to ensure the clarity and cultural relevance of the instruments. All response were carefully coded, entered in SPSS, and check for missing values or errors before final analysis.

Procedure

After finalizing the topic, Researcher found an author's email address on the internet and send them an email, asking for permission to use their scale for research purpose. Researcher also explained the purpose of research. Researcher then recruited participants based on specific inclusion criteria. Those who did not meet these criteria were excused from participating. Participants who agreed to participate provided informed consent, ensuring their privacy and confidentiality. They were informed that their data would be used solely for research purposes. Participants were given the option to withdraw their data at any time, even after completing the scale. To facilitate understanding, the researcher provided a brief overview of the questionnaire's structure and response format. The researcher sent questionnaire to participants in PDF form because it was not possible to have all participants fill it out by hand. Participants were also encouraged to ask questions throughout the data collection process. While the study had no strict time limit, participants typically completed the scales within 15-20 minutes. After completing the scales, the researcher carefully reviewed them to identify any incomplete or double-rated questions. Participants who left questions unanswered were contacted and asked to complete them.

Data Analysis

In this study, the collected data were analyzed using quantitative methods to ensure a clear understanding of the research problem. Data was first organized and entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software for analysis. To test the research hypotheses and

examine the relationships between variables, inferential statistical techniques including Pearson's correlation, Simple regression analysis and t- test were applied.

Ethical Consideration

Before beginning the data collection procedure, the researcher made sure to obtain the informed consent of each participant. This shows that each participant was given thorough and intelligible information about the study, including its objectives, the procedures used to collect data, and the extent of their involvement. The researcher explained the goals of the study in detail to ensure that participants knew exactly what they were consenting to. It was also made clear that their participation was completely voluntary. The researcher provided strong assurances that any private or sensitive information shared throughout the study would be kept private and confidential. By taking precautions like safely storing data and removing names and other identifying information from the final report, the identities of the participants were protected. Participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any moment without facing consequences. This helped create a courteous and secure environment where study participants felt comfortable and in control of their involvement.

Results

Table 2

Pearson Correlation for Present Study Variables (N=100)

Variable	1	2	3
MSPSS	-	-.309**	.587**
UCLA		-	-.313**
ERQ			-

Table 2 revealed that Social Support (MSPSS) has a significant negative correlation with Loneliness (UCLA) (r = –.309, p < 0.01), and also a significant positive correlation with Emotional Regulation (ERQ) (r = .587, p < 0.01). This suggests that lower levels of social support are associated with higher levels of loneliness and lower emotional regulation.

Table 3

Regression Coefficient of Social Supports on Loneliness (N=100)

Variable	B	*B*	SE
Constant	3.60***		1.39
Social support	-.20**	-.30	0.6
R^2	0.09		

****p < .001*

Table 3 displays the impact of social support on loneliness. The R^2 value of .09 reveals that the predictor variable explains 9% of the variance in loneliness. The findings discovered that social support negatively predicts loneliness (β = –.30, p < .001).

Table 4

Regression Coefficient of Social Support on Emotional Regulation (N=100)

Variable	B	*β*	SE
Constant	-.07*		0.4
Social support	1.02***	.59	0.2
R^2	0.07		

Table 4 displays the impact of social support on emotional regulation. The R^2 value of .07 reveals that the predictor variable explains 7% of the variance in emotional regulation. The findings discovered that social support positively predicts emotional regulation (β = .59, p < .001).

Table 5

Mean comparison for Boys and Female participants on loneliness and emotional regulation N-100.

	Boys		Girls				
Variable	M	SD	M	SD	t(df)	P	Cohn's d
Loneliness	3.23	.44	3.14	.36	92.12	.349	.21
Emotional Regulation	1.91	.54	2.21	.62	-2.14	.031	0.55

Table 5 revealed a statistically significant difference in Social Support scores between boys girls, with t (98) = -2.254, p = .023. The findings suggest that girls (M = 2.23, SD = 0.60) reported higher levels of social support compared to boys (M = 1.92, SD = 0.51). The difference was statistically significant at the p < .05 level. Cohen's d was 0.55, indicating a moderate effect size, suggesting that gender had a meaningful impact on perceived social support in the current sample.

Discussion

The present research article aimed to examine the effect of social support on loneliness and emotional regulation in young adolescents living in hostels. Based on the data collected from a sample of 100 participants in various hostel students, several statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS-25, including correlation and regression, to examine the relationships. The first hypothesis stated that Social support is likely to have a significant negative impact on the loneliness of young adolescents living in hostels. The result showed a significant negative correlation with social supports and loneliness of young adolescents living in hostels. Moreover, regression analysis confirmed that social support negatively predicted loneliness (β = –.30, R^2 = .09, p < .01). This implies that adolescents who perceive lower levels of social support report high levels of loneliness. This conclusion was also supported by earlier research. This finding aligns with existing research, such as Zang & Dong (2022), which found a moderate to strong negative relationship between perceived social support and loneliness, particularly among youth populations. Social support appears to buffer feelings of social disconnection, especially in environments such as hostels where individuals are separated from their primary support systems like family. Additionally, Weiss's theory of social provisions supports this result by highlighting that lack of attachment, reassurance of worth, and social integration are key predictors of loneliness. Adolescents in hostels may particularly benefit from perceived peer and institutional support, as it compensates for familial absence and reduces perceived social alienation.

The second hypothesis stated that Social support is likely to have a significant positive impact on the emotional regulation of young adolescents living in hostels. The result showed a significant positive correlation with social supports and emotional regulation of young adolescents living in hostels. Regression analysis further revealed that social support was a powerful predictor of emotional regulation (β = .59, R^2 = .07, p < .01). This suggests that adolescents who feel less supported are lower able to regulate their emotions. The findings provided strong support for this hypothesis. This result was consistent with studies Lopez et al. (2024), which emphasize that social support plays a vital role in emotional development and self-regulation during adolescence. Moreover, Weiss's model suggests that having guidance, a reliable alliance, and

affirmation from peers or caretakers directly supports adaptive emotional coping strategies. In a hostel context, where adolescents face academic and social pressures, social support helps mitigate stress responses and promotes healthier emotional behavior. In addition to testing the hypotheses, the study examined gender differences on social support as Females adolescents living in hostels are likely to have more social supports then male adolescents living in hostels. Results showed that girls also reported higher levels of perceived social support than boys, with a moderate effect size (Cohen's d = 0.55). This suggests that girls may form stronger peer bonds or seek emotional connection more actively than boys in the hostel context, contributing to better emotional outcomes.

Conclusion of the Present Research

The current study was to investigate the effect of social supports on loneliness and emotional regulations in young adolescents living in hostels. The findings confirmed that lower social support significantly increased loneliness and reduce emotional regulation. According to regression studies, social support accounted for a significant 7% of the variance in emotional regulation and 9% of the variance in loneliness. These findings are consistent with previous research, which shows that social support is an important resource for adolescents confronting developmental and environmental obstacles. The findings show that, in the absence of direct familial engagement, perceived emotional and practical support from peers, mentors, or parents can have a major influence on psychological outcomes.

Structured support networks may operate as protective factors against psychological discomfort in hostels environments where young adolescents need autonomy and adjustment, allowing for greater coping and emotional adaption.

Limitations and Suggestions

The study's limitations were a small, primarily female and male sample from a few hostels, dependence on self-reported one-time surveys, and a lack of qualitative data, which reduced generalizability and causal interpretations. Future study should employ bigger and more varied samples, longitudinal and mixed techniques, and a comparison of hostel adolescents and day scholars to better capture cultural, gender, and contextual variations.

Practical Implications

The findings have significant implications for educators, mental health practitioners, and hostel management. Schools and hostels can implement mentoring programs, peer support groups, and seminars on emotional awareness and stress management, with a particular emphasis on males who reported lower levels of support and regulation. Furthermore, preserving virtual family contact and incorporating emotional development into school programs might assist solve the issues of social support, loneliness, and emotional control among hostel teenagers.

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