Research Paper

Relationship amongst Assertiveness, Loneliness, and Guilt-Shame

Radhika Kakkar[1]*, Dr. Nisha Kumari[2]

ABSTRACT

Background: There have been many researches on assertiveness levels in medical staff, or different gender groups. Research on loneliness and Guilt, but never taking shame into account. Most researches are on young adolescents, and individuals with mental or physical illness, but no study investigated the relationship among assertiveness, loneliness, and guilt-shame. 20% young Indians suffer from loneliness, and there are researches proving assertiveness training can improve loneliness. **Aims:** **i)** To study the relationship among assertiveness, loneliness, and guilt-shame in adults, and **ii)** whether there is any gender difference. **Methodology:** Data from 203 participants, two age groups, 18- 24 and 25-35. The participants were administered a booklet containing demographic questionnaire and psychometric scales such as RAS, UCLA loneliness scale, and GASP. **Statistical Analysis:** Descriptive analysis, Correlational analysis, and independent t-test. **Results and Conclusions:** It was noted that there is a positive relationship between assertiveness and loneliness in both age groups, females scoring higher in assertiveness in adults. Young adult females tend to have higher levels of guilt and shame compared to males, also indicating a relationship between assertiveness and shame negative self-evaluation, and a between loneliness and guilt.

Keywords: *Assertiveness, Loneliness, Guilt Proneness, Shame Proneness*

In today's hyperconnected world, with constant social stimuli, ironically loneliness is on the rise as individuals struggle to express their needs effectively, which potentially leads to isolation and negative emotional consequences such as guilt and shame. The spread of loneliness was found to be stronger than the spread of perceived social connections, stronger for friends than family members and stronger for women than for men (Cacioppo, Fowler, & Christakis, 2009). Studies on assertiveness, the ability to stand up for oneself and express needs without aggression, have shown its positive impact on social satisfaction and mental well-being (Wang, Wang, & Chen, 2022). Could it be that expressing our thoughts and emotions assertively could decrease our overall loneliness?

Loneliness

It measures an individual's social isolation. Loneliness increases self-focus and increases sensitivity to social threats or exclusion that contribute to moral dilemmas, self-consciousness and self-blaming, other feelings to contribute to these negative feelings are

[1]Student
[2]Assistant Professor, Amity University Noida
*Corresponding Author

shame and guilt (Hawkley & Cacioppo, 2010). Loneliness fuelled by fear of social disapproval, and self-criticism rooted in a perceived inability to connect authentically. Around 20% young adults report feelings of total loneliness, often going hand in hand with low assertiveness. While India boasts a strong cultural emphasis on community, young adults, and adults (18-35 years) face rising rates of loneliness (Hossain, et al., 2020). As social beings, our profound need for connection is validated by strong and fulfilling relationships that provide security and safety. Social isolation is not purely a result of lack of connections but also our ability to navigate them effectively.

Guilt and Shame

Shame is characterized by negative self-evaluations, while Guilt is characterized by negative behaviour-evaluations (Cohen, Panter, & Turan, Predicting counterproductive work behavior from guilt proneness., 2013). Recent studies assume that despite few distinctive differences, shame and guilt are not opposing emotions, rather emotions that can coexist and often reinforce each other. Those who have feelings of shame tend to experience worthlessness, inferiority and have a need to escape. Guilt is accompanied by a sense of regret and belief that one violated a personal or social moral standard (Bastin, et al., 2021). Both these emotions have positive and negative motivational consequences, wherein Guilt is likely to motivate *reparative behaviour* or move towards a *self-punishing* and self-critical attitude, on the other hand Shame is likely to motivate *withdrawal behaviour* or the need to increase efforts to reach their ideal self (Miceli & Castelfranchi, 2018). Guilt is usually concerned with self-responsibility to avoid harmful behaviour or response, while, Shame's role is more *negative self-evaluation* which does not have any connection to responsibility, but focuses on the disappointing fact that they have any flaws or defectiveness. Shame is more moralistic in nature, where their self-worth isn't at stake (Rozin, Lowery, Imada, & Haidt, 1999).

Assertiveness

The ability to express one's thoughts, feelings, and needs in a confident and respectful manner while also respecting the rights and boundaries of others. In psychological terms, Assertiveness is not an emotion but a behavioural trait or style of communication. Assertiveness is a social skill that depends heavily on effective communication while also respecting the thoughts and wishes of others at the same time. Assertiveness of individual is influenced by the kind of social support provided by friends, family and significant others, which in turn also has an impact on overall wellbeing (Susan, Grace, Santhosh, Anna, & Nair, 2022). According to many research studies, those with assertive behaviour mostly have higher self-esteem. Assertiveness demands more control over outbursts of anger, crying or other behavioural patterns that exhibit lack of control over oneself and healthy ways of coping (Abed, El-Amrosy, & Atia, 2015).

Role of Relationships

Research has shown that strong and healthy relationships can contribute to lower levels of stress, improved self-esteem, and a greater sense of belonging and purpose. Establishing and maintaining strong relationships requires open and honest communication, mutual respect, and emotional support. However, not all relationships are characterized by open and honest communication or mutual respect. Individuals who struggle with assertiveness may experience difficulties in expressing their needs and emotions within their relationships, leading to misunderstandings and unmet expectations. These challenges can contribute to feelings of loneliness and may also be linked to guilt-shame responses (Oana & Ona, 2019).

Lower levels of loneliness are associated with marriage, higher education, and higher income whereas higher levels of loneliness are associated with living alone, infrequent contact with friends and family, dissatisfaction with living circumstances, physical health symptoms, chronic work and/or social stress, small social network, lack of a spousal confidant, marital or family conflict, poor quality social relationships and divorce and widowhood (Cacioppo, Fowler, & Christakis, 2009). It has been observed that due to different culture and norms, individuals from collectivistic societies have a large group of friends and family they connect and interact with compared to those from individualistic societies. Feelings of loneliness may arise when there is a lack of meaningful connection and understanding within the relationship, while guilt-shame responses may stem from difficulties in asserting one's needs and boundaries.

Shame occurs when there is a threat to social self and guilt comes up when there is a threat to relationships. The nature of shame indicates that it is governed by how one is perceived, real or imagined, by others point of view, while, Guilt in it's true self tries to repair relationship conflicts and breaches (Harder & Lewis, 1987) (Wilson, Drozdek, & Turkovic, 2006) (Kim, Talbot, & Cicchetti, 2009). Shame and guilt have been shown to have an impact on the level of functioning of relationships, as shame can lead an individual to avoid others in fear of rejection (Natasha, 2007). The feeling of guilt can predict familial, social, and romantic loneliness, while also negatively predicting social and familial loneliness (Rostami & Jowkar, 2016).

Role of Cultural and Social Factors
The collectivistic nature of Indian society might influence the way individuals express their needs, potentially impacting the relationship between assertiveness and loneliness. Cultural expectations regarding directness, expressing needs, and disagreeing can influence how individuals perceive and enact assertiveness. For instance, collectivistic cultures might prioritize group harmony and indirect communication, leading to different expressions of assertiveness compared to individualistic cultures. Cultural factors like social support systems, family structures, and emphasis on community can influence how individuals experience and cope with loneliness (Huertas-Domingo, et al., 2021). Cultures with strong family or community bonds might offer inherent social support structures mitigating loneliness, while individualistic cultures might rely more on self-reliance, potentially exacerbating feelings of isolation. Cultures with strong emphasis on filial piety might associate greater guilt with disappointing family members, whereas cultures focused on personal achievement might emphasize shame around professional failures.

Gender Differences
Women often report having larger social networks compared to men, but these networks might be more focused on emotional support and intimacy. Men might have smaller, more activity-based social circles, potentially leading to different experiences of loneliness. Loneliness carries a stronger stigma for men than women, making it harder for men to seek help or acknowledge their feelings of isolation. This can exacerbate existing issues and create a vicious cycle (Cramer & Neyedley, 1998).

Women tend to express their guilt and shame more openly, while men might internalize these emotions and resort to unhealthy coping mechanisms, which is also observed in our study. This can hinder emotional processing and resolution (Norberg, 2012).

Men are often socialized to be more assertive and direct, while women might face pressures to be more accommodating and agreeable. This can lead to women under-expressing their needs and desires, potentially contributing to feelings of loneliness and frustration. Women tend to utilize more indirect communication styles, while men often favour directness. A different pattern was found in our study, women being more assertive compared to men.

Study aims

The current study aims to investigate the complex interplay between assertiveness, loneliness, and guilt-shame. Limited research explores the intricate relationship between these variables, particularly in the Indian context. Understanding how assertiveness influences loneliness and the associated emotional consequences – guilt and shame – is crucial for promoting mental well-being. The interplay between these three variables, however, remains largely unexplored. While existing research suggests individual relationships between each element (e.g., assertiveness and loneliness, loneliness, and guilt-shame), a comprehensive understanding of their reciprocal influence is lacking.

This research holds the potential to inform interventions and strategies that promote mental well-being and healthy social connections in young adults. By fostering effective communication skills, building assertiveness, and addressing the underlying emotional burdens of guilt and shame, we can empower individuals to navigate the challenges of modern social life and build fulfilling connections.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Participants

In this study, the total participants of 203 are divided in two sample sets. Sample 1 consists of young adults between 18-24 years of age. The sample consisted of a total 169 young adult participants. Of 169 participants, 85 (50.30%) were females, and 84 (49.70%) were males. With respect to residence, 11 (6.51%) of participants reside in rural areas, whereas 152 (89.91%) of participants reside in urban areas, while the remaining 3.55% of participants preferred to not disclose. The sample 2 consisted of adults between 25-35 years of age. The sample consisted of a total 34 adult participants. Of 34 participants, 17 (50%) were females and 17 (50%) were males. With respect to residence, 3 (8.82%) of the participants reside in rural areas, 28 of the participants reside in urban (82.35%) areas and the remaining preferred to not disclose (8.82%).

Measures

The study employed quantitative methodology to collect data. There were three psychometric scales, questions related to level of assertiveness, level of loneliness and guilt-shame proneness.

Rathus Assertiveness Scale (RAS) was developed by Spencer Rathus (1973). RAS is a 30-item scale rated on a 6-point scale of +3 to -3 (+3= very characteristic of me, -3 = very uncharacteristic of me). The interpretation of scores is divided in three; Low Assertiveness (-90 to -45), Assertive (-45 to 0), and Aggressive (45 to 90). Test-retest reliability was established using a Pearson product moment correlation coefficient (r=0.78) and Split-half-reliability was 0.77. Item to total test correlation was found to be 0.46. RAS demonstrated discriminant validity with respect to aggression.

UCLA- Loneliness Scale (Russell, 1996) is a 20-item scale designed to measure one's subjective feelings of loneliness as well as feelings of isolation. Each item is rated on a scale

of 0 to 3; 0 being "I never feel this way", 1 being "I rarely feel this way", 2 being "I sometimes feel this way", and 3 being "I often feel this way". The measure has been revised since its first publication. The scores range from 20-80; above 50 is considered extreme loneliness. The interpretation of loneliness is subjective. The scale is highly reliable, both in terms of internal consistency (coefficient ranging from 0.89 to 0.94) and test- retest reliability over a year period (r= 0.73). Convergent validity and Construct validity are significant.

Guilt and shame Proneness Scale (GASP) was developed by Cohen et al. (2011). GASP consists of two subscales; Guilt proneness which contains eight items for Guilt Negative Behaviour Evaluations and Guilt repair action tendencies, and, Shame subscale consists of eight items for Shame Negative Self Evaluations and Shame withdrawal actions. A total of 16 items. Each subscale has 4 items, rated on a 7-point scale (1= Very Unlikely, 7= Very Likely). The Validity test of each Guilt subscale item shows overall validity (r= 0.608-0.725) and Validity for Shame subscales on each item is valid (r= 0.525-0.732). Reliability test for GASP obtained a value of r= 0.735 (Hamzah, 2021).

Procedure
Data collection
The researcher contacted participants in Delhi-NCR to obtain data in both online and offline method (80% offline and 20% online). The booklet consisted of demographic question sheet, questionnaires on assertiveness, loneliness, and guilt-shame proneness; RAS, UCLA Loneliness Scale, and GASP. The participants were briefed about the nature and aim of the study and were asked written consent. Further, instructions were given to the participants regarding filling the booklet and clarification of doubts. The participants were assured of confidentiality of information.

Statistical analysis
The data was analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. The data were screened to check the values for each statement for RAS, GASP and UCLA Loneliness Scale. MS Excel was used for scoring the data and MS Word for editing. The Descriptive Analysis, Pearson's Correlational Analysis and T-test were employed on the data.

RESULTS
The results for both age groups (18-24, 25-35) were given. RAS had means (108.31,107.94) and SD (18.61,18.64), values are scattered widely. The absolute skewness (-0.158, -0.146) and kurtosis (0.847; 0.137) were moderately skewed. UCLA Loneliness Scale had means (27.45, 25.82) and SD (13.36,14.95). The absolute skewness (0.087,0.257) and kurtosis (-0.433, -0.848) were normally skewed. The mean for guilt proneness (24, 20-21) and shame proneness (23-24, 14- 20), and SD for guilt proneness (5.5, 4-6) and shame proneness (4.5-5.5, 5-6) were scattered widely. The skewedness for guilt proneness (+1 < -1), shame proneness (+1 < -1) and kurtosis (+1 < -1) were moderately skewed.

Table 1: Pearson Correlation between variables for age group 18-24.

		Total Loneliness	GSP_Guilt-negative behaviour evaluation	GSP_Guilt-repair action tendancies	GSP_Shame negative self evaluation	GSP_Shame withdraw actions	Assertiveness
Total Loneliness	Pearson Correlation	1	-.217**	-.176*	-.105	.091	.377**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.005	.022	.174	.238	.000
	N	169	169	169	169	169	169
GSP_Guilt-negative behaviour evaluation	Pearson Correlation	-.217**	1	.619**	.657**	.195*	.096
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005		.000	.000	.011	.216
	N	169	169	169	169	169	169
GSP_Guilt-repair action tendancies	Pearson Correlation	-.176*	.619**	1	.660**	.036	.032
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.022	.000		.000	.638	.675
	N	169	169	169	169	169	169
GSP_Shame negative self evaluation	Pearson Correlation	-.105	.657**	.660**	1	.171*	.205**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.174	.000	.000		.027	.008
	N	169	169	169	169	169	169
GSP_Shame withdraw actions	Pearson Correlation	.091	.195*	.036	.171*	1	.104
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.238	.011	.638	.027		.179
	N	169	169	169	169	169	169
Assertiveness	Pearson Correlation	.377**	.096	.032	.205**	.104	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.216	.675	.008	.179	
	N	169	169	169	169	169	169

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

According to Table 1, There is a negative correlational relationship between Loneliness and dimensions of guilt proneness, and a positive correlation between assertiveness and loneliness in the age group of 18-24. While in Table 2, the age group 25-35 shows a positive correlational relationship between assertiveness and loneliness.

Further, the independent t-test statistic was conducted to observed the difference between males and females for each variable. In Table 3, Females of age 18-24 show a higher level of guilt and shame proneness compared to males, with no difference in loneliness. Females are observed to show a higher level of assertiveness in this age range, similar was found in assertiveness of participants between 25-35. In Table 4, no difference was found between females and males, apart from assertiveness.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation between variables for age group 25-35.

		Total Loneliness	GSP_Guilt-negative behaviour evaluation	GSP_Guilt-repair action tendancies	GSP_Shame negative self evaluation	GSP_Shame withdraw actions	Assertiveness
Total Loneliness	Pearson Correlation	1	-.094	-.284	-.043	.080	.463**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.597	.104	.809	.654	.006
	N	34	34	34	34	34	34
GSP_Guilt-negative behaviour evaluation	Pearson Correlation	-.094	1	.659**	.619**	.198	.082
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.597		.000	.000	.262	.645
	N	34	34	34	34	34	34
GSP_Guilt-repair action tendancies	Pearson Correlation	-.284	.659**	1	.492**	-.174	-.076
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.104	.000		.003	.326	.670
	N	34	34	34	34	34	34
GSP_Shame negative self evaluation	Pearson Correlation	-.043	.619**	.492**	1	.394*	.195
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.809	.000	.003		.021	.270
	N	34	34	34	34	34	34
GSP_Shame withdraw actions	Pearson Correlation	.080	.198	-.174	.394*	1	.275
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.654	.262	.326	.021		.116
	N	34	34	34	34	34	34
Assertiveness	Pearson Correlation	.463**	.082	-.076	.195	.275	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	.645	.670	.270	.116	
	N	34	34	34	34	34	34

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 3: Independent t-test between variables for age group 18-25.

		Total Loneliness	GSP_Guilt-negative behaviour evaluation	GSP_Guilt-repair action tendancies	GSP_Shame negative self evaluation	GSP_Shame withdraw actions	Assertiveness
Total Loneliness	Pearson Correlation	1	-.094	-.284	-.043	.080	.463**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.597	.104	.809	.654	.006
	N	34	34	34	34	34	34
GSP_Guilt-negative behaviour evaluation	Pearson Correlation	-.094	1	.659**	.619**	.198	.082
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.597		.000	.000	.262	.645
	N	34	34	34	34	34	34
GSP_Guilt-repair action tendancies	Pearson Correlation	-.284	.659**	1	.492**	-.174	-.076
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.104	.000		.003	.326	.670
	N	34	34	34	34	34	34
GSP_Shame negative self evaluation	Pearson Correlation	-.043	.619**	.492**	1	.394*	.195
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.809	.000	.003		.021	.270
	N	34	34	34	34	34	34
GSP_Shame withdraw actions	Pearson Correlation	.080	.198	-.174	.394*	1	.275
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.654	.262	.326	.021		.116
	N	34	34	34	34	34	34
Assertiveness	Pearson Correlation	.463**	.082	-.076	.195	.275	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	.645	.670	.270	.116	
	N	34	34	34	34	34	34

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4: Independent t-test between variables for age group 25-35.

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Total Loneliness	Equal variances assumed	3.329	.077	-1.298	32	.204	-6.58824
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.298	27.117	.205	-6.58824
GSP_Guilt-negative behaviour evaluation	Equal variances assumed	2.324	.137	1.111	32	.275	2.23529
	Equal variances not assumed			1.111	28.260	.276	2.23529
GSP_Guilt-repair action tendancies	Equal variances assumed	.438	.513	1.488	32	.146	2.23529
	Equal variances not assumed			1.488	30.195	.147	2.23529
GSP_Shame negative self evaluation	Equal variances assumed	.574	.454	.500	32	.620	.94118
	Equal variances not assumed			.500	31.179	.621	.94118
GSP_Shame withdraw actions	Equal variances assumed	3.679	.064	-.286	32	.777	-.58824
	Equal variances not assumed			-.286	29.265	.777	-.58824
Assertiveness	Equal variances assumed	.061	.807	-2.151	32	.039	-13.05882
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.151	31.248	.039	-13.05882

DISCUSSION

The objective of the present study was to investigate the relationship among assertiveness, loneliness and guilt-shame in young adults and adults living in Delhi NCR, India. The study also aims to find any gender difference.

According to the findings of the study, individuals between 18-24 and individuals of ages between 25-35, both show a positive significant relationship between assertiveness and loneliness, which means the higher the level of assertiveness in an individual, the lonelier

they are. An old study conducted on, loneliness and its role in different aspects of an individual's life suggested that personality traits, such as low assertiveness can be a contributor to loneliness (Perlman & Peplau, 1982).

There is no significance between assertiveness and dimensions of guilt proneness in young adults. In a study, Individuals that were recovering from childhood sexual abuse usually experience shame, guilt, lack of boundaries, self-blame, over-vigilance, over self-reliance, aloneness, and social stigma (Chouliara, Karatzias, & Gullone, 2013). This study mentions lack of boundaries, but not assertiveness.

But the results show a positive significance between assertiveness and shame negative self-evaluation, and no significance is observed between assertiveness and shame withdraw actions in young adults, which means that shame is inculcated in us from external environment and can become a rigid part of self, even after becoming assertive. But presence of shame does not cancel out assertive behaviour and that is why an assertive individual does not hide out or run away from a problem. According to researches, assertiveness acts like a buffer against feels such as shame, but in this study, assertiveness is observed to have an association towards shame self-evaluation. negatively significant relationship is observed between loneliness and dimensions of guilt-proneness.

According to researches, assertiveness acts like a buffer against feels such as shame, but in this study, assertiveness is observed to have an association towards shame self-evaluation. Further, a negatively significant relationship is observed between loneliness and dimensions of guilt-proneness. This means as experience of total loneliness increases, the negative self-evaluation due to guilt and ability to repair situations decrease. On the other hand, the relationship between loneliness and dimensions of shame proneness are not significant. In adults between 25-35, no correlation was found between dimensions of guilt and shame, with assertiveness and loneliness, apart from a positive significance between assertiveness and loneliness.

The results for the age group 18-24, there is a significant gender difference in dimensions of both guilt and shame proneness, females scoring higher in guilt and shame. On the other hand, for the age group 25-35, there is a significant difference in only assertiveness between the genders, females scoring higher than men. Most articles and researches, concluded females to be less assertive compared to males but this study, which was conducted in Delhi, India, had some different results. Could this be the beginning of certain major changes in personality in genders or could it a cultural aspect?

REFERENCES

Abed, G., El-Amrosy, S., & Atia, M. (2015). The Effect of Assertiveness Training Program on Improving Self-Esteem of Psychiatric Nurses. *Journal of Nursing Science, 1*(1), 1-8.

Bastin, C., Rakesh, D., Harrison, B., Davey, C., Allen, N., Muller, S., & Whittle, S. (2021). Feelings of shame and guilt are associated with distinct neural activation in youth. *Biological Psychology, 159*. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biopsycho.2021.108025

Cacioppo, J., Fowler, J., & Christakis, N. (2009). Alone in the Crowd: The Structure and Spread of Loneliness in a Large Social Network. *J Pers Soc Psychol., 97*(6), 977-991. doi:10.1037/a0016076

Chouliara, Z., Karatzias, T., & Gullone, A. (2013). Recovering from childhood sexual abuse: A theoretical framework for practice and research. *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing, 21*(1). Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1111/jpm.12048

Cohen, T., Panter, A., & Turan, N. (2013). Predicting counterproductive work behavior from guilt proneness. *Journal of Business Ethics, 114*(1), 45-53. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-012-1326-2

Cohen, T., Wolf, S., Panter, A., & Insko, C. (2011). Introducing the GASP scale: A new measure of guilt and shame proneness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology , 100*(5), 947-966. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1037/a0022641

Cramer, K., & Neyedley, K. (1998). Sex differences in loneliness: The role of masculinity and femininity. *SpringerLink, 38*, 645-653. Retrieved from https://link.springer.com /article/10.1023/a:1018850711372

Hamzah, I. (2021). Shame as a Predictor of the Guilt of Sexual Offenders in the Correctional Institutions. *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun, 9*(2), 379-392. doi:10.26811/peuradeun.v9i2.5 52

Harder, D., & Lewis, S. (1987). The assessment of shame and guilt. *Advances in personality assessment, 6*, 89-114. Retrieved from https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1987-97182-006

Hawkley, L., & Cacioppo, J. (2010). Loneliness Matters: A Theoretical and Empirical Review of Consequences and Mechanisms. *Annals of Behavioral Medicine, 40*(2), 218-227. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1007/s12160-010-9210-8

Holt-Lunstad, J., Smith, T., & Layton, J. (2010). Social Relationships and Mortality Risk: A Meta-analytic Review. *PLoS Med , 7*(7). Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1371/jour nal.pmed.1000316

Hossain, M., Purohit, N., Khan, N., Ma, P., Bhattacharya, S., & Pawar, P. (2020). Prevalence and correlates of loneliness in India: A systematic review. doi:10.31124/advance.11533026

Huertas-Domingo, C., Marquez-Gonzalez, M., Cabrera, I., Barrera-Caballeo, S., Pedroso-Chaparro, M., Romero-Moreno, R., & A., L.-B. (2021). Sociocultural Influences on the Feeling of Loneliness of Family Caregivers of People with Dementia: The Role of Kinship. *Int J Environ Res Public Health, 18*(9). doi:10.3390/ijerph18094700

Kim, J., Talbot, N., & Cicchetti, D. (2009). Childhood abuse and current interpersonal conflict: The role of shame. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 33*(6), 362-371. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2008.10.003

Miceli, M., & Castelfranchi, C. (2018). Reconsidering the Differences Between Shame and Guilt. *Eur J Psychol., 14*(3), 710-733. doi:10.5964/ejop.v14i3.1564

Natasha, K. (2007). *The Relationship Between Self Differentiation And The Levels Of Trust, Shame, and Guilt In Intimate Relationships.* Alliant International University. Los Angeles: ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.

Norberg, C. (2012). Male and female shame: a corpus-based study of emotion. *Corpora, 7*(2). Retrieved from https://www.euppublishing.com/doi/abs/10.3366/cor.2012.0025

Oana, J., & Ona, I. (2019). Assertiveness in Self-Fulfillment and Professional Success. Interpersonal Dynamics in the Didactic Relation. *Psychology, 10*(8), 2152-7180. doi:10.4236/psych.2019.108079

Perlman, D., & Peplau, L. (1982). Loneliness: A sourcebook of current theory, research and therapy. *New York: John Wiley & Sons.*, 1-18. Retrieved from https://peplau.psych.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/141/2017/07/Perlman-Peplau-98.pdf

Rathus, S. (1973). A 30-item schedule for assessing assertive behavior. *Behavior Therapy, 4*(3), 398-406. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1016/S0005-7894(73)80120-0

Rostami, S., & Jowkar, B. (2016). The relationship between guilt and shame feelings with the dimensions of loneliness: The moderating effect of gender. *International Journal of Behavioural Sciences, 10*(1), 24-28.

Rozin, P., Lowery, L., Imada, S., & Haidt, J. (1999). The CAD triad hypothesis: a mapping between three moral emotions (contempt, anger, disgust) and three moral codes (community, autonomy, divinity). *J Pers Soc Psychol, 76*(4), 574-86. doi:10.1037//0022-3514.76.4.574.

Russell, D. (1996). UCLA Loneliness Scale (Version 3): Reliability, validity, and factor structure. *Journal of Personality Assessment, 66*, 20-40.

Susan, R., Grace, A., Santhosh, A., Anna, V., & Nair, D. (2022). Assertiveness And Perceived Social Support Among College Students. *International Journal of Engineering Technology and Management Sciences, 6*(5). doi:10.46647/ijetms.2022.v06i05.084

Tangney, J., & Stuewig, J. M. (2014). Two Faces of Shame. *Psychological Science, 25*(3). doi:10.1177/0956797613508790

Wang, C., Wang, X., & Chen, R. (2022). The relationship between assertiveness and social satisfaction among Chinese university students: The mediating role of social acceptance. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction, 20*(6), 1423-1434.

Wilson, J., Drozdek, B., & Turkovic, S. (2006). Posttraumatic shame and guilt. *Trauma Violence Abuse, 7*(2), 122-41. doi:10.1177/1524838005285914

Conflict of Interest
The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Kakkar, R. & Kumari, N. (2024). Relationship amongst Assertiveness, Loneliness, and Guilt-Shame. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, *12*(2), 3046-3055. DIP:18.01.267.20241202, DOI:10.25215/1202.267