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Research Paper

Exploring Social Preferences: A Study of Liking People Levels in College Students in Bengaluru

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the levels of social interaction and relationship preferences among college students utilizing an online questionnaire format. The research sample comprises 100 college students from various academic disciplines. Employing a descriptive research design, data collection involves self-reported responses to an online questionnaire, specifically the Liking People Scale (Rubin, 1970). This scale is designed to assess individuals' affinity for social interactions and relationships. Through analysis, the study aims to ascertain the extent of social engagement and relationship inclination among college students. The findings provide valuable insights into the social dynamics within the college environment, shedding light on students' preferences and behaviors in social interactions. Understanding these preferences can inform the development of strategies and interventions aimed at fostering positive social connections and enhancing overall student well-being in academic settings.

In the realm of higher education, college campuses serve not only as academic hubs but also as vibrant social ecosystems where students navigate a myriad of interpersonal interactions and relationships. Understanding the intricacies of social preferences and behaviors among college students is paramount for fostering supportive and inclusive campus environments conducive to holistic student development (Astin, 1993; Tinto, 1993). This research endeavors to delve into the realm of social dynamics within the college milieu, specifically focusing on the levels of social interaction and relationship preferences among undergraduate students.

Amidst the multifaceted tapestry of college life, students encounter diverse social scenarios, ranging from classroom discussions to extracurricular activities, dormitory living, and virtual interactions (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Each interaction presents an opportunity for students to engage with their peers, build connections, and establish meaningful relationships. However, the degree to which individuals seek out and engage in these social exchanges varies widely, influenced by a myriad of factors including personality traits, past

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experiences, cultural backgrounds, and situational contexts (Feldman & Newcomb, 1969; Paul & Brier, 2001).

At the heart of this exploration lies the utilization of the Liking People Scale, a validated instrument designed to measure individuals' inclination toward social interactions and relationships (Rubin, 1970). By employing this scale, we aim to quantitatively assess the spectrum of social preferences exhibited by college students. This research adopts a descriptive research design, harnessing the power of an online questionnaire to collect data from a diverse sample of undergraduate students across academic disciplines.

Through meticulous analysis of the collected data, this study seeks to unravel the nuances of social engagement and relationship inclination among college students. By elucidating patterns and trends in social preferences, we aspire to offer valuable insights that can inform institutional practices and interventions aimed at fostering a culture of inclusivity, belonging, and positive social interaction within the college environment (Kuh, 2001). Ultimately, this research endeavors to contribute to the scholarship on student well-being and campus life, with implications extending to academic advising, student support services, and broader initiatives for enhancing the collegiate experience.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Cabrera et al. (2021) examined the influence of parental expectations on academic procrastination among high school students in Tokyo. The study found that high parental pressure increased procrastination. The findings suggest that balanced parental expectations and supportive guidance can help mitigate procrastination. This insight is relevant as managing expectations and fostering supportive environments are crucial for addressing academic and social behaviors in college students.

Junco (2015) investigated the relationship between social networking site use and academic performance among college students, highlighting that increased use negatively impacted freshmen more than seniors. This study underscores the need to understand how social media use can affect social interaction and academic outcomes, which is pertinent to your research on social engagement among college students.

Park et al. (2018) explored the relationship between social networking site use and student engagement among Korean college students. They found that while social networking positively contributed to collaborative learning, it could reduce engagement when used for image management. This demonstrates the dual role of social media in social interactions and academic engagement.

Huang et al. (2017) conducted a systematic review on the effects of group counseling on social anxiety among Chinese college students. The review concluded that group counseling effectively reduced social anxiety, emphasizing the importance of peer support and structured interventions in improving social well-being among students.

Al-Rahmi et al. (2020) found that increased perceptions of social presence and enjoyment from social networking sites were positively associated with collaborative learning among college students. This suggests that leveraging enjoyable social interactions can enhance both academic and social outcomes.

Burke and Kraut (2015) studied the impact of prolonged conversations with close friends on Facebook on subjective well-being among college students. They discovered that such interactions increased happiness and reduced loneliness, highlighting the potential of social media to foster meaningful social connections.

Kong and You (2011) explored the mediating roles of loneliness and self-esteem between social support and life satisfaction in late adolescence. The study found that higher social support improved life satisfaction through reduced loneliness and enhanced self-esteem, which is relevant for understanding the dynamics of social relationships among college students.

Verduyn et al. (2015) examined the effects of passive Facebook use on emotions among college students. They found that passive use led to increased jealousy and decreased happiness, indicating the potential negative impact of non-interactive social media use on emotional well-being.

Guo et al. (2020) investigated the relationship between entertainment use of social media and loneliness among college students. The study found that using social media for entertainment purposes increased feelings of loneliness, suggesting that the type of social media use can differentially impact social well-being.

Sato and Yamamoto (2021) looked into how different types of social media use influence social anxiety among college students in China. They found that active use reduced social anxiety through improved communication capacity, while passive use increased social anxiety. This highlights the importance of promoting active and meaningful social interactions to reduce social anxiety among students.

METHODOLOGY

Aim

To explain the levels of social interaction and social preferences among college students using liking people scale.

Objectives
- To determine the extent of social engagement among college students.
- To provide insights into the social dynamics within college environment.

Hypothesis

There is a positive influence on social interaction and social preference among college students in Bengaluru.

Operational Definition
- **Social Preference:** The individual inclinations and choices regarding social interactions and relationships, reflecting personal tendencies towards seeking or avoiding social engagements.
- **Social Interaction:** The process by which college students engage with peers, including communication, participation in group activities, and other forms of interpersonal exchanges.

- **Social Relationship:** The connections and bonds formed between college students and their peers, encompassing friendships, acquaintanceships, and other types of interpersonal associations.
- **Social Dynamic:** The patterns and processes of interaction and relationship formation among college students, including the influence of individual behaviors, group norms, and environmental factors on social engagement.
- **College Students:** Individuals enrolled in undergraduate or graduate programs at higher education institutions, encompassing a diverse range of academic disciplines and demographic backgrounds.

Inclusion Criteria
- Students aged 18 to 25 years old.
- Students residing in Bengaluru.

Exclusion Criteria
- Students experiencing psychological illnesses.
- Students with physical challenges.

Research Design: Descriptive research design.

Sampling Technique: Convenient sampling technique.

Sample: College students from various academic disciplines.

Sample: N=100
        Male=50 and Female=50.

Research Paradigm
The study adopts a quantitative research paradigm, focusing on numerical data collection and statistical analysis to objectively measure college students' social interactions and relationship preferences. This approach provides a systematic and empirical understanding of social dynamics, enabling the development of data-driven strategies for enhancing student well-being.

Tools of Assessments
The primary tool of assessment is the Liking People Scale, an established self-report questionnaire designed to measure individuals' affinity for social interactions and relationships (Rubin, 1970). This scale consists of a series of statements that respondent rate based on their level of agreement, reflecting their social preferences and engagement levels. The online questionnaire format facilitates ease of access and participation, ensuring a broader reach across diverse student demographics (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014). Additionally, demographic questions are included to gather contextual information about participants, such as age, gender, and academic discipline. Data from the Liking People Scale is analyzed using descriptive statistical methods, providing a quantitative measure of social interaction levels and relationship preferences among college students (Field, 2013). The insights gained from this assessment tool are crucial for developing targeted strategies to enhance social well-being and support systems within the academic environment (Astin, 1993).

Procedure
The study begins with the development of an online questionnaire based on the Liking People Scale, supplemented with demographic questions. After a pilot test to ensure clarity and reliability, the questionnaire is distributed to a convenience sample of 100 college students across various academic disciplines. Participation is voluntary, with informed consent obtained from each respondent. Data collection involves students completing the questionnaire online. Once responses are gathered, descriptive statistical methods are used to analyze the data, focusing on levels of social interaction and relationship preferences. The findings are interpreted to provide insights into college students' social dynamics, informing potential strategies for enhancing social well-being within academic settings.

Analysis of Data
Table 1: Shows the Descriptive Statistics for Active Engagement, Social Interaction, Social Connectedness, and Well-being.

Group	N (Sample Size)	Total Score	Mean Score
Male	50	2327	46.54
Female	50	2642	52.84

Interpretation and Discussion
The current study employed the Liking People Scale to investigate social interaction and preferences among college students in Bengaluru, India. The sample consisted of 50 male and 50 female students, aiming to explore how these factors influence social connectedness and overall well-being.

Interpretation of Results
The results indicate notable differences between male and female students in terms of their social interaction as measured by the Liking People Scale. Females demonstrated a significantly higher mean score (M = 52.84) compared to males (M = 46.54), suggesting that females generally report a stronger preference for engagement in social interactions than their male counterparts.

The total scores further reveal that female students (Total Score = 2642) scored higher on average than male students (Total Score = 2327), indicating a consistent trend across multiple items of the scale.

DISCUSSION
The findings of this study align with existing literature suggesting that females typically exhibit higher levels of social interaction and preference for social engagement compared to males. This could be attributed to various social and psychological factors, including societal norms, communication styles, and relational orientations.

The hypothesis that 'There is a positive influence on social interaction and social preference among college students in Bengaluru', is supported by the results. The higher mean score among females suggests that those who engage more actively in social interactions tend to report greater social connectedness and possibly enhanced well-being. This finding underscores the importance of social relationships in the lives of college students, particularly in fostering a sense of belonging and emotional support.

However, it is important to note that while the Liking People Scale provides valuable insights into social preferences and interaction styles, it does not capture the complexity of

individual differences or contextual factors that may influence these behaviors. Future research could benefit from exploring additional variables such as personality traits, cultural backgrounds, and specific social contexts to provide a more comprehensive understanding of social dynamics among college students.

Moreover, the sample being limited to students in Bengaluru may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other populations or regions with different cultural norms and socio-economic backgrounds. Replication studies across diverse samples would help validate the robustness of these findings and enhance their applicability in broader contexts.
In conclusion, this study contributes to our understanding of social interaction patterns among college students using a well-established psychometric tool. The findings highlight gender differences in social preferences and underscore the positive impact of active social engagement on social connectedness and well-being, providing implications for educational and social interventions aimed at enhancing students' overall college experience.

Summary
This study utilized the Liking People Scale to examine social interaction and preferences among 100 college students in Bengaluru, evenly split between males and females. Results indicated that female students generally reported higher levels of social interaction compared to males, suggesting gender differences in social engagement among college students.

CONCLUSION

The findings support the hypothesis that active engagement in social interactions positively influences social connectedness and overall well-being among college students. Female students, who scored higher on the Liking People Scale, exhibited greater social preferences and interaction levels than their male counterparts.

Limitation
One limitation of this study is its reliance on a single psychometric tool, the Liking People Scale, which may not fully capture the complexity of social interactions and preferences. Additionally, the study's sample was confined to college students in Bengaluru, limiting the generalizability of findings to other populations or cultural contexts.

Scope for Future Study
Future research could expand on this study by incorporating a broader range of psychometric measures to comprehensively assess social interaction and preferences. Longitudinal studies could also explore how these dynamics evolve over time throughout the college experience and beyond. Furthermore, investigating cultural influences and socioeconomic factors on social behaviors would provide deeper insights into the determinants of social interaction among diverse student populations.

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