"Together but Separate": What is the Correlation If Any, between Social Loneliness, Virtual Friendship, and Use of Social Networks

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## Sample

The study included 313 respondents, 238 (76%) females and 75 (24%) males. Of these, 73 (23.3%) were in the 9 th grade, 63 (20.1%) in the 10 th grade, 83 (26.5%) in the 11 th grade, and 94 (30%) in the 12 th grade. The distribution of religiosity

# Abstract

With the rise of online social networks, the development and maintenance of relationships are gradually being transferred to the virtual sphere. Technological developments have created a revolution that forces people to cope with situations that were unknown to them several decades ago. This study aimed to examine the association, if any, between social loneliness and virtual friendship. In addition, the effect of gender on these variables was also examined. The research participants included 313 high school students from all over Israel, with an age range of 14 18. The study examined social loneliness, the nature of virtual friendships, and participants' undue use of social networks, using two self-report scales. The research findings indicate a significant correlation between social loneliness and these variables, as well as an effect of gender. A correlation was also found between social loneliness and virtual friendships, but no interaction was found between these variables and gender, such that this research hypothesis was not confirmed. These findings might illuminate the development of interpersonal communication in the present era, as well as the role of virtual communication in the lives of individuals.

# Outcome

In the study (Yavich Davidovitch, 2019) there was a positive correlation between social loneliness and undue use of social networks. Namely, the higher the reported social loneliness, the higher the reports of undue use of social networks. This finding is compatible with previous findings in the literature showing that the sense of social loneliness. Confirming the second research hypothesis, among females a positive association was found between social loneliness and undue use of social networks. In contrast, among males, no such association was found. Confirming the third research hypothesis, a positive association was found between social loneliness and virtual friendship. Namely, the higher the social loneliness reported the higher the scores on the virtual friendship scale, and vice versa.