

Abstract

Despite having evidence showing the heightened vulnerability of youths towards social isolation and loneliness, which are prevalent issues during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the importance of maternal reactions to youths' negative emotions towards youths' emotional wellbeing, no research has focused on understanding more about the relationships between these variables. To address this gap, this study examined the relationships between youths' social isolation and the separate constructs of social and emotional loneliness, and the possible moderating role of perceived maternal supportive and nonsupportive reactions to youths' negative emotions within these relationships. 55 participants aged 18 to 19 (35 females and 20 males; mean age = 18.58, $SD = 0.50$) completed various measures of social isolation, social and emotional loneliness, and perceived maternal supportive and nonsupportive reactions to their negative emotions. The results showed that a significant, positive relationship existed between youths' levels of social isolation and social loneliness, while no significant relationship existed between youths' levels of social isolation and emotional loneliness. Moreover, no significant interactions were found between social isolation and both perceived maternal supportive and nonsupportive reactions to youths' negative emotions in predicting both youths' levels of social and emotional loneliness. Implications of such findings and the limitations of the current study will be discussed in detail.

Keywords: COVID-19 pandemic; emotional loneliness; perceived maternal reactions to youths' negative emotions; social isolation; social loneliness