

Rumination as a Mediator between Loneliness & Life Satisfaction among First-year Students in a South African University

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The negative association between loneliness and satisfaction with life among youth has been scantily reported. In addition, the exacerbating role of rumination has not been documented. Therefore, this study examined the mediating effect of rumination in the association between loneliness and life satisfaction among first-year undergraduate students at the North-West University, South Africa. Data for the study were sourced from 385 (Mean age = 19.98, $\sigma = 2.15$, $\varphi = 67.8\%$) respondents and were analyzed using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation and Hayes Process Macro. The results showed that loneliness and rumination independently and negatively correlated with life satisfaction. The negative association between loneliness and life satisfaction was worsened by ruminative thinking among first-year students. Ruminative thinking should be discouraged among first-year students who are possibly struggling to adjust to the new university environment. Appropriate psychological interventions should be put in place to socially engage first-year students in order to help them build responsible social networks within the university environment.

Keywords: First year students, life satisfaction n, loneliness, rumination

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