

Romantic Relationship's Effect on High Schoolers

Daksha Chandragiri

California High School, San Ramon, USA

ABSTRACT

This study looks at how teenagers handle relationships based on a survey of high school students. We focused on three groups: those dating, those who've never dated, and those who used to date but are single now. Our findings show different experiences among these groups, revealing how they interact with friends, handle emotions, and view dating. For those dating, some feel left out from their friends, but many aren't too stressed about their relationships. Some spend a lot of time with their partners, but not everyone is sure about their future together. For those who've never dated, some feel pressure to date because of society, while others prefer being single. Many feel lonely at times and think dating is something they should do because others are doing it. For those who used to date but are single now, many want to find new relationships. Some feel better after their last relationship, while others struggle. Most feel they've grown as a person since then. In conclusion, this study helps us understand how teenagers deal with relationships, showing that everyone has different experiences and feelings about dating and being single.

Introduction

Going to school and meeting up with friends were always a normal thing for me as a teenager. But recently, since I joined high school almost 3 years ago, something changed. Everywhere I look, people are dating. I've always seen couples when I'm outside with my family. My parents are a couple aren't they? I don't know when it started to be normal for me to see couples everywhere to the point I don't pay specific attention to them. But it always poked at something deep inside, when I see other high schoolers being able to give and receive love in a way I have never been able to before. In the last six months, these feelings grew, spreading into others that I don't know how to materialize. I have so many questions, but I can't seem to find the answers within me. My best friend started dating a year ago, and luckily due to our close bond she was able to open up to me and fulfill my request of giving me some answers. But there are still so many more. Are there others like me, who feel the same way, who have the same unanswered questions? Or is it just me, feeling this way. Am I alone? I decided to take things into my own hands and try to understand what I want as a high schooler who has never had a romantic relationship in a world where I think there is a type of societal expectation to be dating at this age. I want to know how romantic relationships, no matter the status of it, affect high schoolers in all ways, academically, mentally, and socially.

I wanted to ask various people who are single how they are feeling and how they are doing, but I decided to broaden the spectrum at which I look at to gain the information I wish to reflect on. I split the research into three categories, people who are currently in a relationship, people who have never been in a relationship, and people who have dated before but aren't currently.

As a high schooler who is in one of these categories, I understand how it is to not know what the other sides of this situation is, and how it feels to not have any answers to these questions that you can't find words for. By presenting this data to other high schoolers and anyone interested, they can understand how they feel and help them make better decisions by knowing the whole story. At this point in a teenager's life, we approach a fork in the road, leading to many paths. Knowing about what the other paths hold, how people deal with the decision of choosing one over another, and the effects of make one decision over another can really help people

make the correct decision for themselves. There is no one correct answer, and reading the rest of this will help you understand that, but with this data and research, people can make the decision that is the most correct for them.

I create a survey for this research project, and the questions i gave people to answer were odd according to most. I believe that these straightforward, odd, questions help people internalize their thought, even the ones they were or thought they should suppress, and give them a safe place to share them. This can help them better understand what kind of things they should do to make their life better, for them to understand how to make their future theirs, which is quite significant. For the people reading this paper later, I hope to be their Google, holding the answers to all their questions they didn't even know they had. Not everyone can put up a survey in order to understand the massive web of feelings and thought they hold, so hopefully based on the data I collect of and for the high schoolers of my generation can help those looking for answers. Like I was.

Methodology

To conduct my research I used Google, more specifically Google Forms, to create a survey. My target population for conducting this survey are high schoolers, and the people I could reach with my efforts are primarily from the Bay Area of California. Once the survey was completed, I contacted my school administration and they put the survey on the school's newsletter, accessible by all. The survey was also posted on my social media which was a good place for many others to see the survey and participate. Thinking this wasn't enough of an area to collect data from, I asked friends from other schools, still in the Bay Area, and had them spread it through messaging their friends and classmates the survey link. Their help was very useful and I was very thankful. In the end, my sample size for this research is 125 participants. I knew that this topic, romantic relationships, is a sensitive topic for people. I can't just ask people to answer these very intimate questions about their love life and expect to trust me. A key thing I made sure of was on the newsletter, on my social media, and when friends spread it, they mentioned that this form was anonymous. I manipulated the Google Form made to make sure they didn't need to give their name, type in their email, or have their email collected automatically. It was also the first disclaimer I put on the first section of the form to reassure that this was a safe place to answer these questions and that the data collected were going towards a research project and nothing more.

Results

These are some of the most important results that came from the survey once 125 people had participated and filled out the survey. The survey was split into three sections and there is a graph per subsection.

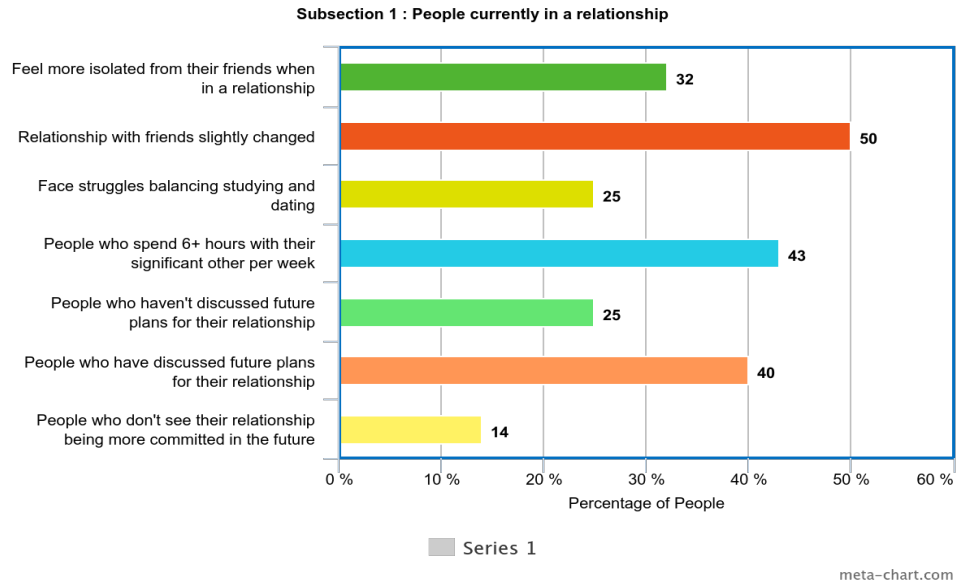


Figure 1. Data from people who are currently in a relationship

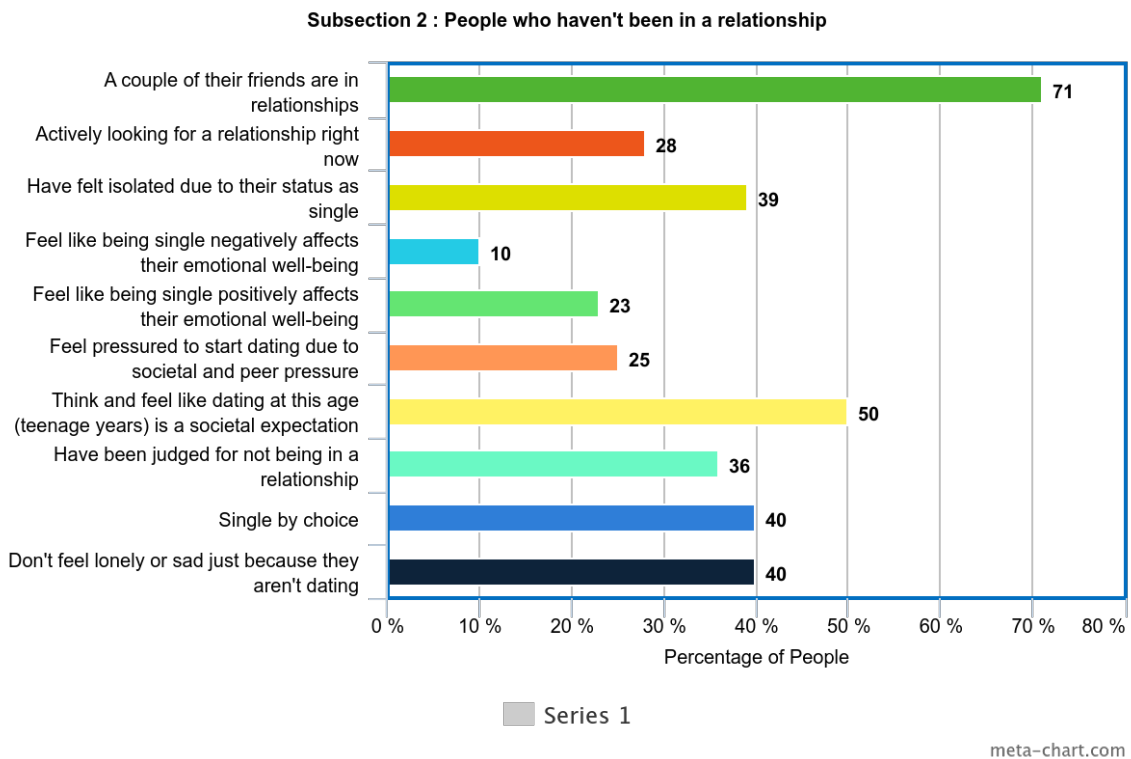


Figure 2. Data from people who haven't been in a relationship

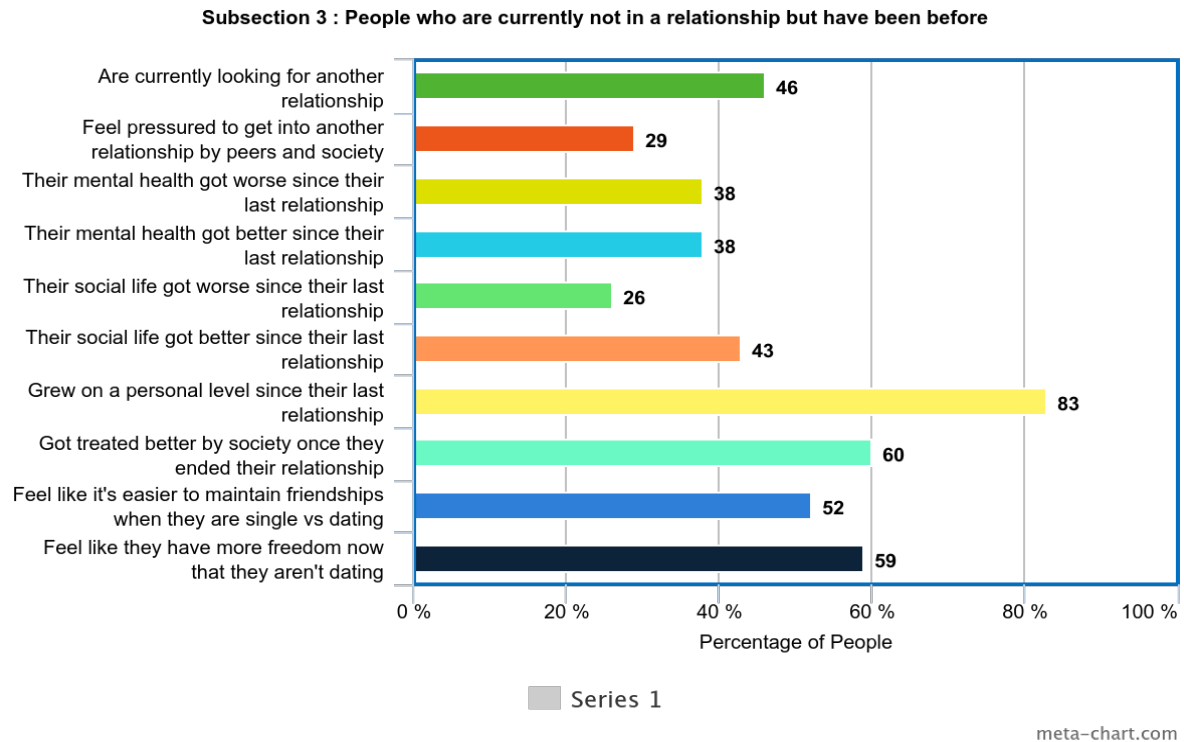


Figure 3. Data from people who are currently not in a relationship but have been before

Discussion and Analysis

For individuals currently in relationships, it appears that a significant portion (32%) feel a degree of isolation from their friends, indicating a potential strain on their social connections. Despite this, half of them report only slight changes in their relationships with friends, suggesting a nuanced impact. Balancing academics and dating proves challenging for a quarter of respondents, highlighting the multifaceted demands of teenage life. Interestingly, while a majority (68%) experience relatively low stress levels within their relationships, a substantial proportion (43%) spend over six hours per week with their partners. Additionally, differing perspectives on future commitment are evident, with a notable minority (14%) expressing doubts about their relationship's long-term trajectory.

Conversely, among those who haven't experienced relationships, feelings of isolation due to singledom are prevalent, affecting nearly two-fifths of respondents. While a significant portion (28%) actively seek relationships, societal and peer pressures loom large, with nearly half feeling compelled to conform to societal dating norms. Despite this, a substantial portion (40%) assert their single status as a personal choice, suggesting a diversity of attitudes toward romantic involvement.

For individuals previously in relationships but currently single, a desire for new connections is apparent, with nearly half actively seeking new partnerships. Interestingly, experiences post-relationship vary widely, with fluctuations in mental health and social life reported. Notably, a majority experienced personal growth following the end of their relationships, despite feeling societal pressures to re-enter the dating scene. Trust dynamics within past relationships also emerge as significant, with differing levels of trust influencing breakup decisions for some respondents.

Limitations

This data is not meant to be used practically but more theoretically. It serves as a source of true data and findings based on the true feelings of high schoolers and their take on their specific situations. This data is to be viewed as a platform that other teenagers can look to when in doubt of what they want to do or how they want to progress with their relationships in high school. There are of course limitations to this research. The sample size is only 125 people, which is a very small fraction of high schoolers in the US and in the world. Factors like gender, race, and religion weren't taken into consideration. A majority of these people are from one city and everyone participating was from the Bay Area of California. The environment and more specific society the participants grew up in would have affected the results and might have resulted in more like-minded answers and less variety. A suggestion for future research is to have a clear and effective plan on how to spread the survey to a much, much wider audience to reach people of every background to allow a greater variety of responses.

Conclusion

The survey revealed diverse experiences and attitudes towards romantic relationships among high school students. For those currently in relationships, while many experience minimal stress and spend substantial time with their partners, a notable portion feels isolated from friends and uncertain about future commitment. Conversely, among those without relationship experience, feelings of isolation and societal pressure to conform to dating norms are prevalent, despite a significant minority choosing to remain single by choice. Additionally, for individuals previously in relationships but currently single, there is a desire for new connections alongside varied post-relationship experiences, including fluctuations in mental health and personal growth. These findings underscore the complex dynamics shaping teenage romantic relationships and the diverse responses to societal expectations and individual preferences. This survey and research fulfilled the main objective which was to gather data to help individuals looking for answers to the questions they are unable to say out loud.

Acknowledgments

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References

Chandragiri, Daksha. "Romantic Relationship's Effect on High Schoolers." *Google*, Google, 24 Jan. 2024, docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe3PJbh91U08yLlmEZePIW68Wi0wh9avjY8bo7o8IGtpP9qpA/viewform?usp=sf_link.