

Showering and Loneliness Take 10: Participants from MSU Subject Pool Spring 2014

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Sample and Procedure

Participants were 531 college students who received course credit as part of the Michigan State University Psychology Subject Pool during the Spring Semester of 2014 (69.4% women; 91.2% between the ages of 17 and 21 and only 0.8% were 25 or older). Recruitment occurred between April 9, 2014 and April 25, 2014. Measures were the same as used in Donnellan, Lucas, & Cesario (in press) as taken from Bargh and Shalev (2012). Participants completed relevant items embedded within a larger survey that included measures of impulsivity, narcissism, risk-taking, self-esteem, sensation seeking, and well-being. Data were collected over the internet using the same survey software used for Studies 5 to 9 in Donnellan et al. (in press).

We included five directed response items to detect careless responding and a single honesty item at the end of the demographic questions: "I responded to this survey honestly." The participants who answered "Yes" to the honesty question and responded correctly to the directed responses items are included here as the attentive sample. This represents approximately 80% of the participants with data on the relevant variables. The physical warmth index was created by standardizing the three bathing/showering items (see supplemental table) and averaging them into a composite ($\alpha = .06$) after the frequency and temperature items were reverse coded so that higher scores indicate more frequent baths/showers and warmer baths/showers.

Results and Discussion

The focal correlations are reported in Table 1. There was no evidence for an association between the Bargh and Shalev Loneliness scale ($M = 2.12$; $SD = .62$, $\alpha = .90$) and the Physical Warmth Index ($r = .04$, $p = .384$, $n = 531$; 95% CI = $-.05$ to $.13$). The hypothesis relevant correlation between the water temperature item and the loneliness scale was not statistically distinguishable from zero ($r = .003$, $p = .942$, $n = 531$, 95% CI = $-.08$ to $.08$). These same results were obtained when correlations were computed using all participants with relevant data (see Table 1). Consistent with Donnellan et al. (in press), there was a statistically reliable correlation between duration and loneliness ($r = .13$, $p = .004$, $n = 531$, 95% CI = $.04$ to $.21$). Altogether, these results generally replicate the results reported in Donnellan et al. (in press) and further call into question the strength of the correlation between water temperature and trait loneliness. Moreover, the distributions of the showering/bathing items were generally consistent with those reported in Donnellan et al. (in press) and inconsistent with the distribution obtained by Bargh and Shalev (2012) for their Study 1a (see again Donnellan et al., in press). The modal response was that students reported taking about 1 shower/bath per day (64.7%) and it was extremely rare to find participants who reported bathing/showering less than once per week.

Table 1: Correlations between Trait Loneliness and Bathing/Showering Items

	Frequency	Temperature	Duration	Index	N
Spring 2014: Attentive	-.063	.003	.126*	.038	531
Spring 2014: All	-.078	-.027	.108*	.002	658

Note: * $p < .05$.

Distributions of Showering/Bathing Items

How often do you usually take a bath/shower?

Value	Response	Attentive	All
1	More than 3 times a day	-	0.3%
2	3 times a day	0.4%	0.3%
3	2 times a day	11.1%	12.8%
4	Once a day	64.7%	62.9%
5	Once every other day	19.7%	19.4%
6	2-3 times a week	4.1%	4.1%
7	Once a week	-	0.2%
8	Less than once a week	-	0.2%
	Sample Size	532	666

What temperature do you use for the water when you take a bath/shower?

Value	Response	Attentive	All
1	Very hot	10.5%	10.5%
2	Hot	63.9%	61.6%
3	Warm	23.7%	25.7%
4	Lukewarm	1.5%	2.0%
5	Cold	0.4%	0.3%
6	Very Cold	-	-
	Sample Size	532	666

About how much time do you spend in the bath/shower?

Value	Response	Attentive	All
1	Less than 2 minutes	-	0.2%
2	2-5 minutes	1.7%	1.7%
3	5-10 minutes	21.1%	21.2%
4	10-15 minutes	36.1%	36.2%
5	15-20 minutes	25.4%	24.2%
6	20-30 minutes	12.8%	14.0%
7	Over 30 minutes	3.0%	2.7%
	Sample Size	532	666