Modernity’s effect on social connections from an evolutionary psychology perspective

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Theory

➢ Humans evolved psychology aligns with hunter-gatherer lifestyles.
➢ Hunter-gatherers lived in bands that included immediate and extended family.
➢ Living in a group increases evolutionary fitness.
  ○ Groups that are cooperative provide more resources for each other.
  ○ By living and working in a group knowledge is spread.
➢ In hunter-gatherer bands the extended and immediate family provide child care, resources, and social support.
➢ The act of reciprocal altruism and kin selection facilitates trust between the immediate and extended family.
➢ Humans psychology is programmed to look for extended family members.
Theory Continued

➢ Modern conditions and attitudes are rooted in economic independence and division.
➢ There is more focus on the nuclear family interests rather than both the immediate and extended family.
➢ It is harder to maintain the extended family unit and does not satisfy humans evolved psychology for the extended family social unit and connection.
Hypothesis

➢ The hypothesis is that individuals who have less connection with their extended family, will experience greater feelings of loss, insecurity, and loneliness.

➢ To test this hypothesis a survey was administered to Albright College students to assess their satisfaction with their social connections.
Survey

➢ Questions were asked about the compositions of their family home and who they were closest to.
➢ The frequency of telecommunications and in person visits with both immediate and extended family were assessed.
➢ The survey asked about overall satisfaction with their peer and family relations, feelings of anxiety, lack of guidance, disappointment, and wanting a stronger bond with family.
Predicted results

➢ The goal was to see if there was a correlation between loneliness, lack of guidance, anxiety, and satisfaction in a person's life with the frequency of contact and visit with family.
➢ Individuals that have less in person contact with their immediate and extended family will have less satisfaction with their family.
➢ Those who have experienced less family satisfaction will have more feelings of lacking guidance.
➢ Those who live with their extended family will experience more satisfaction with their family and peers. They will experience less loneliness, anxiety, and disappointment with their social connections.