


Involuntary Celibacy in Adolescence: Psychosocial Factors and the Role of the Family

Ergenlik Döneminde İstemsiz Bekârlık: Psikososyal Faktörler ve Ailenin Rolü

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ABSTRACT

Involuntary celibacy is the state in which an individual desires a romantic or sexual relationship but is unable to sustain or is rejected. This situation occurs not only in adulthood but also during adolescence. Adolescence is the transition from childhood to adulthood. Social isolation or the inability to form relationships during this period can exacerbate long-term low self-confidence, anxiety disorders, and feelings of loneliness. The causes of involuntary celibacy in adolescence are multifaceted. Social skill deficits, low self-esteem, concerns about appearance, peer bullying, negative body image, unrealistic relationship expectations brought on by digitalization, and emotional immaturity are among the primary causes. Idealized relationship expectations, particularly those created by the influence of social media, can cause an adolescent to distance themselves from real-life relationships. The role of the family in this process is highly decisive. Overprotective or oppressive parental attitudes can hinder the development of a child's autonomy and relationship-building skills. Similarly, emotional neglect, neglect, and abuse can also lead to an adolescent's inability to develop secure attachments and healthy relationships. Healthy communication, supportive attitudes, and role model behaviors within the family environment positively impact an adolescent's self-development and social skills. Involuntary celibacy during adolescence is a multilayered phenomenon shaped not only by individual but also by environmental and familial factors. This review article will discuss the definition of involuntary celibacy, a new concept for both researchers and parents, its causes, the role of the family in this process, and its treatment.

Keywords: Involuntary celibacy, incel, adolescence, parental attitude, romantic relationship

ÖZ

İstemsiz bekârlık, bireyin romantik ya da cinsel bir ilişki yaşamak istemesine rağmen bu ilişkileri sürdürememesi ya da reddedilmesi durumudur. Bu durum yalnızca yetişkinlik döneminde değil, ergenlik döneminde de karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Ergenlik, çocukluktan yetişkinliğe geçiş dönemidir. Bu dönemde ortaya çıkan sosyal izolasyon veya yetersiz sosyal ilişki kurma durumu, uzun vadede özgüven eksikliği, kaygı bozuklukları ve yalnızlık duygusunun derinleşmesine yol açabilir. İstemsiz bekârlığın ergenlikteki nedenleri çok boyutludur. Sosyal beceri eksiklikleri, düşük benlik saygısı, dış görünüşle ilgili kaygılar, akran zorbalığı, olumsuz beden algısı, dijitalleşmenin getirdiği gerçeklikten uzak ilişki beklentileri ve duygusal olgunlaşmamışlık başlıca nedenler arasındadır. Özellikle sosyal medyanın etkisiyle oluşan idealize edilmiş ilişki beklentileri, ergenin gerçek hayat ilişkilerinden uzaklaşmasına neden olabilir. Ailenin bu süreçteki rolü oldukça belirleyicidir. Aşırı koruyucu veya baskıcı ebeveyn tutumları, çocuğun özerklik ve ilişki kurma becerilerinin gelişmesini engelleyebilir. Aynı şekilde, duygusal ihmal veya ilgisizlik ile istismar da ergenin güvenli bağlanma geliştirememesine ve sağlıklı ilişkiler kuramamasına yol açabilir. Aile ortamındaki sağlıklı iletişim, destekleyici tutumlar ve rol model davranışlar, ergenin benlik gelişimini ve sosyal becerilerini olumlu yönde etkiler. Ergenlikte istemsiz bekârlık sadece bireysel değil, çevresel ve ailevi faktörlerle şekillenen çok katmanlı bir olgudur. Bu derleme makalede araştırmacılar için olduğu kadar anne babalar için de yeni bir kavram olan istemsiz bekârlığın ne olduğu, nedenleri, ailenin bu süreçteki rolü ve tedavisi tartışılacaktır.

Anahtar sözcükler: İstemsiz bekarlık, incel, ergenlik, ebeveyn tutumu, romantik ilişki

Introduction

Adolescence is defined as a transition period from childhood to adulthood. Adolescence is described as a very complex and difficult period for parents as well as for experts working in this field. During this period, physical, behavioral, cognitive, social and emotional changes and growth occur in girls and boys. These changes affect their thinking as well as their communication and interaction with the environment (WHO 2025). While adolescence is a period that can be easily overcome or overcome with little anxiety for some young people with the support of the social environment such as family, peer group and school, for some it can be psychologically turbulent and painful (Kulaksızoğlu 2020). It is observed that the problems that emerge during adolescence are significantly affected not only by genetic and environmental factors, but also by the increasing use of technology (Ektiricioğlu et al. 2020). Physical health problems such as sleep disorders, poor posture, and eyestrain; cognitive disorders such as shortened attention span, impaired learning and memory, hyperarousal, decreased creativity, and speech disorders; Emotional problems such as addiction, mental health disorders, decreased self-esteem, and social problems such as deterioration in social skills, social isolation, cyberbullying, and tendency to violence are common consequences of intensive technology use (Gezgin 2023).

While it's possible to recognize and appropriately guide adolescents going through challenging times, ignoring these processes can lead to more serious negative consequences for both the adolescent and their environment. Problems that progress unnoticed and emerge suddenly can create a sense of helplessness in parents, prompting them to search for the root of the problem within their current circumstances. However, the problem can have an early and insidious onset. Therefore, adolescence should be considered a period that requires special attention, where parents undergo a learning process that raises their awareness and allows them to easily recognize cues. Some studies in the literature, particularly those that facilitate behavioral inferences during adolescence, are also noteworthy. When assessing behavioral problems in children and adolescents, Achenbach and Edelbrock (1978) categorize these problems as internalizing and externalizing. Children who suppress their emotions, are self-conscious, and anxious tend to have internalizing problems. Children who exhibit behavioral disorders, are aggressive, and are hyperactive tend to have externalizing problems. Internalizing problems are more subtle and unpredictable than externalizing problems, and when they are recognized, they are not considered as significant for intervention as externalizing problems (Savi 2008). Behavioral problems, particularly those that develop early and go unnoticed, pose a risk for both internalizing and externalizing problems (Perle et al. 2013). Recently, the number of studies investigating technology use, particularly social media use, by individuals with high anxiety has increased significantly, and the results of these studies suggest a relationship between social media use and social anxiety (Vannucci et al. 2017, Ağırtaş and Güler 2020, Çetinkaya 2021). In a study conducted by Bektaş (2018), it is pointed out that individuals with high social anxiety are more prone to using technology and can express themselves more easily in these environments.

Recently, adolescence issues and problems have begun to receive significant attention both in scientific studies and in the media, television, and digital platforms. These studies provide outputs that address and evaluate both the family and the adolescent, identify the origins of problem behaviors, and provide preventive or intervening information and messages when necessary (Ahmad and Naqvi 2016, Keser Açıkbash and Yılmaz Irmak 2024). However, regardless of the platform or source, this information sometimes leads individuals, families, and even society to be even more vigilant, becoming even more fearful of adolescence and even of adolescents themselves.

Involuntary celibacy (incels), a new concept that has recently become known to parents through the media and frequently appears in the literature, has attracted the attention of both parents and experts and scientists interested in this topic. However, it appears that parents lack sufficient knowledge about what they can do. It is noteworthy that the number of publications on involuntary celibacy, a topical issue in national and international literature, is limited, and that no similar article has been found on this topic, focusing on the role of the family and intervention methods. Therefore, this review article aims to contribute to the literature as well as to guide parents.

Involuntary Celibacy Movement

Recent studies have introduced a new concept to the literature: involuntary celibacy (involuntary celibates). The term "incel," derived from the first letters of the words "involuntary celibacy," is widely used both internationally and among the public. It refers to a community of people who live a sexually abstinent life, even if this is not their true intention or desire. The process of developing this concept began in 1997 with a website created by Alana, a sexually frustrated Canadian university student, during her dating struggles (Kassam 2018, Taylor 2018). With this website, Alana aimed to create a space for those unable to enter or sustain sexual relationships (Taylor 2018). Therefore, these chat rooms were open to everyone, regardless of gender, race, or sexual orientation (Daly and Reed 2022). Thanks to this website, Alana saw that she was not alone, and over time, this site became a support group where various sharings were made (Alana 1997, Kelly and Aunspach 2020). After achieving her goals in dating and sexuality, Alana transferred the website she had created to other members, and over time, the site fragmented into male-only communities that harbored resentment towards women who experienced sexual frustration and often excluded them (Kassam 2018). The involuntary celibacy movement, sparked by Alana's belief that "unity is strength," has seen numerous individuals espousing the ideology of involuntary celibacy across various platforms. Platforms such as the Men's Rights Movement, Men Going Their Own Ways, and Flirtatious People are platforms where men experiencing sexual frustration and harboring anger and hostility toward women find themselves trapped (Ging 2019). It has also been argued that the ideology of involuntary celibacy was a reaction against second-wave feminism in the 1990s, a direct response to feminism (Nagle 2017).

The dictionary definition of involuntary celibacy is "a person who considers himself or herself involuntarily celibate and who displays extreme resentment and hostility toward those who are sexually active" (Britannica 2025), and "a member of an online subculture of mostly heterosexual men who are unable to engage in romantic or sexual relationships" (Merriam-Webster 2025). However, it is clear that there is still not enough consensus on a universal definition (Speckhard et al. 2021). The most common characteristic is that involuntary celibates are predominantly men, who, despite their efforts, consistently struggle to establish sexual or romantic relationships and experience psychological distress (Temelli 2022, Sparks et al. 2024).

The ideological foundation of the involuntary celibacy movement is based on the idea that it is organized around a hierarchy. Individuals within the involuntary celibacy ideology hold a globally hierarchical view of masculinity (Ging 2019), and they collectively express their frustration with this view and may even resort to violence when taken to extremes (Daly and Reed 2022). At the top of this hierarchy is the "alpha" group, comprised of men and women and responsible for most sexual activity. Men in this group are sexually desirable and preferred by women. Therefore, involuntary celibates harbor intense hostility toward this group. While they may feel resentment toward men or women in the "beta" group in the middle rung, it's not as intense as they feel toward the alpha group. At the bottom rung are the "involuntary celibates," who go unnoticed (Baele et al. 2019). In addition to anger and resentment toward women, the involuntary celibate movement's core belief is that women are calculating, selfish, unfaithful, and exploitative of men (Ging 2019). It seems inevitable that the intense anger felt by these individuals who identify as involuntarily single, and particularly their negative feelings and attitudes toward the opposite sex, pose a risk for all forms of violence. They are known to have gained notoriety through some public attacks (Sparks et al. 2024), and these characteristics have also made them the subject of television series. "Adolescence," a 2025 digital platform series, unravels the mystery of a murder, but reveals even more shocking truths behind it. And here, viewers are introduced to the concept of involuntary celibacy (incel). This series challenges parents. Their teenage son, whom the parents thought was perfectly fine, turns into a murderer overnight. Although they may not believe what's happened, the parents find themselves questioning themselves when their teenage son admits all the accusations against him at the end of the series. The reasons for the violence are not far off and this is most strikingly reflected on screen after the parents question themselves. In Turkey, in late 2024, it's also noteworthy that the perpetrator of two femicides, who committed suicide after committing the murder, had connections to a group called incel (BBC News, 2024). This new information is particularly concerning for families experiencing difficulties

communicating with their adolescent children. So, what are the reasons driving their children to this anger?

Involuntary Celibacy: Causes and Consequences

Psychosocial Factors and Consequences

It is difficult to disentangle the psychosocial causes and consequences of identifying as involuntarily celibate. These causes and consequences are likely to interact and reinforce each other. However, it can be hypothesized that poor social skills, lack of dating experience, lack of positive peer relationships, shyness, anxiety, autism, bullying, late pubertal maturation, and body image issues may increase the likelihood of experiencing a lack of sexual activity. Analyses of involuntary celibate forum discussions and survey responses also report psychological problems related to negative body image, shyness, anxiety, social skill deficits, autism, bullying, sexual and romantic inexperience, loneliness, depression, and suicide among individuals with involuntary celibate ideology (Daine et al. 2013, Marchant et al. 2017, Stijelja and Mishara 2023). The increasing number of recent studies on involuntary celibacy indicate a high prevalence of mental health problems within involuntary celibacy communities (Costello 2022, Moskalenko et al. 2022). The results of the study, conducted with 54 individuals who identified as involuntarily celibacy, revealed high rates of depression (91%), anxiety (85%), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (40%), autism spectrum disorders (53%), and a history of bullying (91%) (Moskalenko et al. 2022).

Analyses of involuntary celibacy forum discussions and survey responses report psychological problems related to negative body image, shyness, anxiety, social skill deficits, autism, bullying, sexual and romantic inexperience, loneliness, depression, and suicide for those with involuntary celibacy ideology (Stijelja and Mishara 2023). Therefore, when addressing mental health issues, it is crucial for professionals to assess their propensity for violence, work on relationship and communication skills, address their attitudes and feelings toward women when working with men, and, most importantly, examine the attitudes and feelings toward women in those who are not in close relationships by questioning whether they are in a close relationship. Mental health professionals must be well aware of this new concept and be particularly careful not to overlook it during their consultations. Preventive and interventional measures will be addressed further below.

The Role of the Family and Its Consequences

Studies indicate that individuals with social skills deficits, obsessive thinking, inability to recognize danger signs, and a reluctance to seek help are more prone to involuntary celibacy. Childhood traumas such as sexual abuse, physical abuse, bullying, rejection, and social isolation can make individuals more vulnerable to involuntary celibacy. Individuals with involuntary celibacy often harbor unresolved negative experiences with a woman, such as a mother, partner, or a misogynist male figure, and may become excessively fixated on these experiences (Woodward et al. 2021). The relationships established between mother and father in early childhood, and the warmth parents show their children, are extremely important in an individual's life, and the quality of this relationship significantly impacts an individual's social and psychological development (Bowlby 1952, Erikson, 1963). The importance of the father's relationship with their child is particularly emphasized. Adolescents who are rejected by their fathers and who do not grow up with a warm approach are at increased risk of depression and hostility (Tufail et al. 2015). There are also studies showing that perceived parental rejection is associated with aggression and anger (Akse et al. 2004, Avcı 2006). A longitudinal study conducted by Hale and colleagues (2008) revealed that depressed adolescents perceived their parents as rejecting, and this perceived rejection predicted the adolescent's anger. The concept of rejection is particularly prominent among involuntary singles. Individuals who are anxious about rejection are highly sensitive to rejection, which can lead to problems in their interpersonal relationships. These individuals may perceive themselves as being rejected in an uncertain situation, are unable to cope with this situation, and may overreact to this uncertainty. Considering that sensitivity to rejection is formed early in the relationship with parents (Özen and Güneri 2018), early parent-child relationships

deserve special attention. Although all of these offer some causal explanations for the concept of involuntary celibacy, this concept can be better explained by early relationships with parents and even adolescence, when sexual identity development is important, because it includes anger towards the opposite sex and difficulties in close relationships and sexuality.

While gender is determined in the womb before birth, sexual development begins at birth, laying the foundations in early childhood. During adolescence, hormonal changes bring sexual behavior to the forefront (Dere 2023). From the moment a child discovers their genitals, they ask their parents questions to satisfy their curiosity, seeking the support of those they trust most. However, talking about sexuality and genitals can be difficult for parents, as they may not know how or when to inform their children about this topic, or for some parents, it may be a topic they shouldn't discuss. Children who receive no or sufficient information from their parents turn to other sources, particularly seeking information and experience about sexuality through the internet, a world of disinformation. In addition to not receiving accurate information, children and adolescents may face increased rejection, particularly in relationships with the opposite sex, due to inaccurate and even harmful information during this developmental period, when sexual behaviors are at the forefront. While findings indicate that the majority of involuntary celibates are between the ages of 18 and 30, it is noteworthy that this is also seen in children under 18. However, due to the lack of evidence due to their young age, age-specific data is also insufficient (Woodward et al. 2021). Therefore, it is vital to investigate the factors that lead to becoming part of this group, especially in childhood, and to identify and address anger and interpersonal problems in children and take the necessary precautions accordingly.

For adolescents who struggle to obtain adequate and accurate information about sexuality from their parents, the search for a sexual identity can be challenging and potentially problematic. Adolescence is a crucial developmental period for the construction of a sense of identity. A well-established identity during this period enables a child to develop a healthy and realistic body image, feel a sense of belonging to a group, and establish and maintain healthy and consistent relationships (Çetin et al. 2014). Gender identity is one of the areas where identity exploration takes place. Gender identity, which is a bio-psychosocial process at its core, encompasses not only biological sex but also the adolescent's interests, orientations, and behaviors consistent with their biological sex (Uncu 2018). Therefore, a parent who is afraid to discuss sexuality will deprive the adolescent of an adult with whom they can identify. This is a significant psychosocial factor that can negatively impact sexual identity development.

In addition to not being able to talk about sexuality, mental health issues in both parents, relationship problems between parents, domestic violence and exposure to this violence, neglect and abuse, coming from a culture where women are degraded and belittled, and negative attitudes toward girls not only affect parents' relationships and communication with their children but also lead them to become unhealthy objects of identification for their children (Dere 2023). Considering that the foundations of personality development are laid early, this situation compels parents to be more careful in their attitudes and behaviors, given the potential for their children to use them as role models (Checa and Abundis-Gutierrez 2017). It is particularly noteworthy that in environments characterized by misogyny or where the father is violent towards his or her spouse, children experience emotional and behavioral problems and may even exhibit abusive behaviors (Dobson 2010, Barran 2014). In circumstances where children grow up experiencing this form of maltreatment, they may become adults who abuse others, seek excessive love and attention, perhaps due to inadequate affection, and are unable to cope with rejection. It is important to acknowledge that underlying the ideology of involuntary celibacy are issues of identity, belonging, security, and exclusion (Migration and Home Affairs 2021).

A psychoanalytic perspective reveals that individuals who are restricted in early childhood (most often by their mothers) can overcome this stressful situation by glorifying the restrictive individual. However, those who fail to engage in this glorification or cope with the restrictions they experience develop hatred toward women and are even more likely to commit hate crimes against women (Gökulu 2019). Adolescents with this ideology believe they deserve to be loved, and their efforts to form close relationships can veer toward exploitation, and emotional distress in the face of rejection can lead to violence. These problems in close relationships can undermine a person's self-efficacy and lead to increased anger and aggression (Lankford

2021). For involuntarily single individuals, as rejection increases, so too do the levels of emotional and behavioral problems (Sparks et al. 2024), and they often exhibit hostility toward women who reject them (Baele 2021). When involuntary celibates exhibit violent behavior, it has been suggested that this is the result of third-party variables such as parental control, family environment, or psychiatric comorbidity (Del Pozzo et al. 2018). One study found that approximately 68% of participants had depression, 74% had anxiety, and 40% had a diagnosis of autism (Jaki 2019). Involuntary celibates diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and a history of bullying were reported to be more likely to glorify murderers who share the ideology of involuntary celibate behavior and to fantasize about raping and inflicting violence on the victim (Moskalenko et al. 2022). Considering these findings, it is clear that mental health is a significant concern among the public.

Adolescent Technology Use and Its Consequences

Not only do mental health problems and problems related to relationships and interactions with parents arise, but also the fact that children, under the influence of the technological age, are increasingly turning to technological products and, without appropriate intervention, can become addicted to this technology (Ektiricioğlu et al. 2020), posing a risk for involuntary celibacy. Studies on technology addiction indicate that adolescents with parental difficulties, those who do not receive adequate love, those who do not grow up in a healthy and safe home environment, those who lack social support, and those who are lonely and shy are more likely to develop technology addiction (Kıran and Gündoğdu 2010, Ceyhan 2011, Çakır and Oğuz 2017). For adolescents experiencing loneliness, technological tools like the internet are perceived as platforms where they can build social relationships. Due to their difficulties in establishing interpersonal relationships, they may turn more to the virtual world. This creates a vicious cycle for adolescents. The more they feel lonely, the more they turn to the virtual world, and the more they become immersed in it, the more they can distance themselves from the real world (Caplan 2002).

Spending excessive time online can lead to adolescents feeling increasingly lonely and depressed. While adolescents may use these digital platforms provided by the internet to alleviate their loneliness and gain greater acceptance, or even join communities on these platforms, these community members (individuals with an ideology of involuntary celibacy) impose the knowledge that their loneliness is a product of unchangeable and powerful circumstances beyond their control (society, genetics). They then continue to interact with this group because it is one of the few places where they feel accepted. However, the communication channels used by the group itself reinforce the idea that they will not and cannot be accepted anywhere else. Individuals with this ideology often become trapped in a repetitive logical cycle in which they blame society for not being good enough for a relationship, for not accepting them, and then become so hopeless and depressed that they are unable to make positive changes in their lives. It becomes nearly impossible to pull them out of this cycle (Keller 2023).

Individuals in the involuntary celibacy group use technology extensively, gathering on online platforms to socialize and maintain their angry and aggressive behaviors on these platforms, finding support and strengthening these feelings (Dewey 2014, Marche 2016). Because involuntary celibates meet exclusively online, the building blocks of the involuntary celibate worldview are heavily linguistic. The involuntary celibate vernacular is imbued with dense sexual and sociomoral values that involuntary celibates use to define and organize "others." Table 1 shows common concepts used in online involuntary celibate communities (Daly and Reed 2022).

The labels involuntary celibates apply and use reflect both a person's position in the sexual hierarchy and their perceived moral worth (Zimmerman 2024). While the labels "alpha" and "beta" are used for those in the upper and middle ranks of the involuntary celibacy hierarchy, those who consider themselves at the bottom of the hierarchy are those who embrace the involuntary celibacy movement. Involuntary celibacy also has solutions symbolized by different colored pills: the red pill and the black pill. Those who embrace the red pill are encouraged to make changes in themselves by undergoing cosmetic surgery and following strict exercise routines. While these individuals may have a tendency toward violence against women, this violence remains at the level of verbal violence (Cook 2018). Physical violence and aggression are seen in those who prefer the black pill and believe that no matter what they do, they cannot change the existing

hierarchy, and that the only change is to tear it down and rebuild it rigidly. These individuals exhibit terroristic behavior. Believing themselves trapped within this existing system, this group is more dangerous and prone to violence. As long as they cannot change the system, they seek alternative solutions, either self-harming or killing those who benefit from it (Van Brunt et al. 2021, Lindsay 2022). All of this underscores the importance of rapidly initiating treatment and intervention efforts, particularly political solutions, at individual and societal levels, against these groups, which have the potential to cause harm both individually and societally. Furthermore, considering the increasing number of individuals who adhere to the ideology of involuntary celibacy, it is vital that steps be taken as soon as possible for family-based preventative measures.

Table 1. Commonly used concepts in online involuntary celibacy communities (Daly & Reed 2022)

Concept	Definition
Black Pill	Recognition of scientific evidence that appearance is the most important factor in mating and attraction; BlackPilled (adjective) is used to describe someone who accepts the black pill.
Incel	A person who desires a romantic relationship but is unable to do so; a member of the online community of involuntary celibacy (or Incelosphere)
Incelsphere	Bringing together online forums, communities and other media (e.g. YouTube etc.) to promote and share ideas and experiences of involuntary celibacy
Manosphere	A collection of larger online communities or networks of websites and groups focused on masculinity and men's experiences, including Team Artists, Men's Rights Activists, Men Going Their Own Ways, and more.
NEET*	Abbreviation for "Not Educated, Employed, or Trained"
SEAmassxing(ing)	SEAmassxing is the practice of increasing a man's dating chances as a Westerner by dating in South East Asia.
Shit-post	Commenting on or posting intentionally offensive content in forums or social media sites to gain reaction or popularity

Intervention and Preventive Studies in the Involuntary Celibacy Ideology

As the information provided in this article and the relevant literature suggest, one of the most fundamental steps is to strengthen early parent-child communication and interaction, and to provide psychoeducation for parents at each developmental stage, regardless of their preferences. This training will not only protect against the ideology of involuntary celibacy, but will also facilitate children and parents' adaptation to an ever-changing world and protect them against new traumatic experiences. Another crucial step is digital media literacy. While digital media literacy seems like a method that should be taught to children and young people, it's crucial for parents to have this knowledge as well. Individuals with an involuntary celibacy ideology often reach out to introverted adolescents and children who have experienced similar challenges, are easily influenced by the terminology they use, and, over time, these children begin to interact and share on these platforms for extended periods. This growing audience creates a worldview that is often harmful to individuals and can lead some to commit acts of violence out of desperation and disgust with society (Keller 2023). Therefore, providing information about the distorted reality of the ideology of involuntary celibacy can be a way to increase resilience in adolescents. It is important to contact the parents of children or adolescents who hold the ideology of involuntary celibacy to inform them about their preferred platforms, the digital communication channels they use, and the terminology used by those who hold this ideology.

Within the scope of the training, it is important to also address the concept of sexuality, which should be a key topic, including the concept of consent in sexual intercourse, refusal and coping mechanisms, the concept of masculinity, which has also been the subject of recent studies in social psychology, and toxic masculinity and its risks. Among the measures to be taken is to prioritize studies on toxic masculinity, which defines male dominance, the devaluation of women, homophobia, and conservative male characteristics that encourage violence. When working with parents and children on these issues, it is

necessary to focus on more vulnerable or vulnerable groups, and to develop preventive mental health policies and initiate efforts with these groups.

Teachers, as well as parents, have important responsibilities in strengthening children and adolescents' interpersonal relationships, developing social skills, combating bullying, and developing coping skills against rejection. School support is especially necessary to reach a large number of children and families. Some programs have been implemented in this area with successful results. For example, studies have shown that school programs such as "Zippy's Friends," by focusing on specific psychosocial challenges, help children develop useful coping strategies and interpersonal skills to cope with early-stage problems such as bullying, loneliness, relationship problems, and suicidal thoughts (Mishara and Ystgaard 2006).

Treatment

Given that the ideology of involuntary celibacy is closely aligned with the concept of criminality, there is a need for rapid and effective interventions as well as preventative measures. However, involuntary celibacy's perception that mental health professionals are predominantly women, their distrust of the mental health system, and their perception of therapy as a waste of money make it difficult to direct them to therapeutic interventions (Speckhard et al. 2021). Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is widely believed to be the most effective therapy. CBT attempts to identify maladaptive cognitions that may be associated with involuntary celibacy. The most common maladaptive cognitions are victimization, hopelessness, and misattribution (Maxwell et al. 2020, van Brunt 2021). One study found that individuals with an involuntary celibacy ideology, particularly those who stated they were unable to find a partner due to their physical appearance, perceived themselves as unworthy of love and believed this situation was unchangeable (Keller, 2023). CBT helps involuntarily single individuals identify their irrational, rigid, and catastrophic thought patterns and find alternative ways to process the world by helping them think differently about their low self-esteem and rejection (Van Brunt 2021). Similarly, cognitive restructuring techniques aim to reduce the body image concerns and self-esteem issues experienced by involuntarily single individuals (Maxwell et al. 2020). Some also believe that CBT should focus on overgeneralizations about society and women. This is often the driving force behind the hopelessness and low self-esteem often seen among involuntary celibates. Individuals with an involuntary celibacy ideology, where this belief is so strong, may have difficulty seeing the purpose of improving self-esteem or finding other interests or coping strategies. Therefore, these overgeneralizations should be addressed first, and then the focus should be on improving self-esteem (Keller 2023). Given the importance of online communities for involuntary celibates, group therapy, along with individual therapy, can be emphasized as a therapy technique that can achieve rapid results and reach a larger number of people. Group therapy can provide a supportive peer environment for exploring the emotions associated with involuntary celibate status (Maxwell et al. 2020). Improving access to online mental health resources, particularly for young men, is seen as one of the most important policy recommendations to counter the growing prevalence of involuntary celibate ideology (Hoffman et al. 2020). Addressing "toxic masculinity" and gender inequality is crucial for encouraging healthier expressions of feelings of low self-esteem and worthlessness in young boys (O'Malley et al. 2020).

Conclusion

The ideology of involuntary celibacy and the psychology of individuals who embrace it, recognizing the depth of their underlying problems, and acknowledging their grievances and needs are key to taking the necessary precautions. Significant efforts and dedicated specialists are needed to provide training on healthy coping tools and their daily use, particularly for youth and adults who are socially withdrawn and whose feelings of anger and loneliness are prominent. Furthermore, studies on developing social and interpersonal skills, alleviating loneliness, and fostering a sense of connection are also needed (Wong 2009, Li and Wong 2015). These skills training activities can yield greater benefits when implemented from an early age. Therefore, families and professionals who work with families and children in the early years have significant responsibilities. Increasing the number of family education programs, starting with the child's birth, developing policies on the causes and prevention of violence, preventing child and adolescent

delinquency, and moving away from sexist attitudes and approaches are among the paths to solutions. Involving teachers and school administration, as well as families, is crucial. In this regard, the Turkish education system needs to increase the number of positively effective programs like "Zippy Friend's," and support school programs such as supporting healthy relationships between girls and boys, strengthening interpersonal skills, and increasing group work among children.

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