

Project

Psychology



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Loneliness and Age: Impact on Depression among the Youth and the Elderly
January 30, My proposal intends to examine if loneliness and age can impact health through resulting to depressive symptoms. This study is related to the seed article because of its investigation on how other people perceive lonely individuals. It is different from this article because it focuses on the psychological effects of loneliness among young and older people. The independent variables for the proposed study are loneliness (two levels: lonely and non-lonely) and age (two levels: young (sixteen to nineteen years old) and older people (thirty to thirty-three years old)). The dependent variable is depression. The hypotheses are the following:

Hypothesis 1: Lonely people will score higher on depression than non-lonely people.

Hypothesis 2: Younger people will be more depressed than older people.

Hypothesis 3: Young people who are lonely will score higher on depression than older participants who are also lonely.

These hypotheses are based on the idea of loneliness as affecting people's social conditions, although they focus on loneliness' health effects on freshmen students. Hypothesis 1 is related to the seed article in terms of being concerned of how lonely people feel, but it goes beyond the former by determining the correlation between loneliness and depression. It is also different from the seed article because this study measures the health conditions of lonely people, unlike the seed article that measures the perceptions of other people regarding lonely people. The seed article already mentioned how loneliness affected depression (Lau & Gruen, 1992, p. 188), which emphasizes the importance of studying loneliness. I want to focus on this connection between loneliness and depressive symptoms to also help <https://assignbuster.com/project/>

underline that loneliness can have short-term and long-term health effects. Hypothesis 2 differs from the seed article because of the latter's examination on how gender affects loneliness, while this study focuses on age differences. It expands on this article because it determines if age can have different impacts on depression. It assumes that young people may feel more socially alienated than older people, so they may have higher depression risk. Knowing which age group has higher depression risks can help allocate resources for educating and helping them.

Hypothesis 3 diverges from the seed article because the latter showed that gender can impact perceptions of loneliness, while my study believes that younger people who are depressed are at higher risk for depression than older ones because of the developmental maturity differences between these opposite age levels. The youth may experience worse health effects due to loneliness because social exclusion may be harder on them who are still growing and may desire social connection (Ladd & Ettekal, 2013). It is possible that unsociable young people may bear stronger social stigma and social alienation that can affect their health more than older individuals.

All variables will be measured through self-report surveys. Loneliness will be measured through the UCLA Loneliness Scale which evaluates observations of social isolation and loneliness (Russell, 1996, as cited in Jaremka et al., 2013, p. 1312). Depressive symptoms will be measured through the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression (CES-D) Scale (Jaremka et al., 2013, p. 1312). These measures are different from the seed article that measured the perceptions of other people regarding lonely people.

References

Jaremka, L. M., Fagundes, C. P., Glaser, R., Bennett, J. M., Malarkey, W. B., & <https://assignbuster.com/project/>

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Ladd, G. W., & Ettekal, I. (2013). Peer-related loneliness across early to late adolescence: Normative trends, intra-individual trajectories, and links with depressive symptoms. *Journal of Adolescence*, 36(6), 1269-1282.

Lau, S., & Gruen, G. E. (1992). The social stigma of loneliness: Effect of target persons and perceivers sex. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 18(2), 182-189.