



Original Research Article

## Loneliness among Elderly Having Psychological Disorders

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### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Loneliness causes people to feel empty, alone and unwanted. People who are lonely often crave human contact, but their state of mind makes it more difficult to form connections with other people.

**Aim and objectives:** To analyze loneliness among elderly with psychological disorder.

**Methods:** A cross sectional study done among elderly residing in old age home residing in their home. 160 elderly were selected randomly. Predesigned and pretested questionnaire was used as a study tool.

**Results:** Majority of the respondents residing in their home and residing in old age home felt loneliness. Whereas 61.25% and 31.25% respondent belong to mild loneliness and 27.5% and 36.25% belong to moderate loneliness and there were also (11.25% and 32.5%) belong to sever loneliness.

**Conclusion:** Maximum respondents felt more loneliness with psychological disorders. They needed to feel well and avoid feeling sorry for yourself and be a friend to yourself.

**Keywords:** Psychological disorders, loneliness, old age home.

### INTRODUCTION

Old age is the closing period in the life span. It is a period when people 'move away' from previous, more desirable period of 'usefulness'. Age sixty is usually considered the dividing line between middle and old age. [1] Aging, in particular among the oldest (80+) is accompanied by physical problems such as frailty and functional decline and mental problems such as reduced cognitive capacity and greater loneliness. Loneliness is a phenomenon that occurs in all stages of life and is a significant problem for many older people. Previous research has shown that loneliness

in old age is a risk factor that can be linked to various health-related problems, physical and mental problems. [2] In today's fast paced world of rising political, economic, and social instability, one may find it increasingly difficult to ward off feelings of anxiety, depression or loneliness. A nagging sentiment of dissatisfaction with life in general may debilitate many a mind. In such cases, individuals may turn to a variety of facets for not only therapeutic purposes but also for prevention from such ill feelings in the future. For many, this sanctuary is found primarily beneath the wings of religion. [3] Loneliness has similarly been associated

with poorer health. Although conceptually similar to social isolation, loneliness is the feeling or perception of being alone. It has also been defined as the evaluation that one is not achieving a desired level of social interaction. [4]

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was cross sectional including conducted in Lucknow city of Uttar Pradesh, India. This was carried out

among elderly over the age of 60 years. The total sample size was 160 elderly, (80 residing in old age home, 40 males and 40 females) and (80 residing in their home, 4 males and 40 females). Pre designed and pretested interview schedule along with “UCLA Loneliness scale” Published by Peplau R.D. and Ferguson M.L(1978) was to collected data. The independent variable was gender and dependent variable was loneliness.

## RESULTS

**Table 1(a) Distribution of the respondent on the basis of frequency of loneliness scale.**

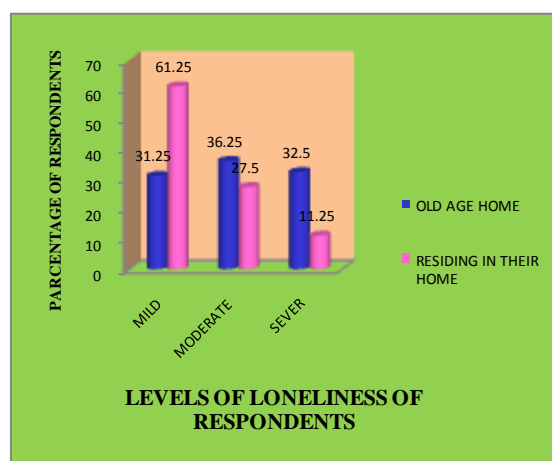
Residing in their home (N=80)													
S. NO.	STATEMENTS	MALE				FEMALE				TOTAL			
		N	R	S	O	N	R	S	O	N	R	S	O
1	I am unhappy doing so many things alone	2 (5)	17 (42.5)	17 (42.5)	4 (10)	0	26 (65)	7 (17.5)	7 (17.5)	2 (2.5)	43 (53.75)	24 (30)	11 (13.75)
2	I have nobody to talk to	6 (15)	10 (40)	14 (35)	4 (10)	10 (25)	17 (42.5)	6 (15)	7 (17.5)	16 (20)	27 (33.75)	20 (25)	11 (13.75)
3	I cannot tolerate being so alone	16 (40)	12 (30)	12 (30)	0	26 (65)	3 (7.5)	11 (27.5)	0	42 (52.5)	15 (18.75)	23 (28.75)	0
4	I lack companionship	19 (47.5)	6 (15)	13 (32.5)	2 (5)	26 (62.5)	1 (2.5)	12 (30)	2 (5)	44 (55)	7 (8.75)	25 (31.25)	4 (5)
5	I feel as if nobody really understands me	11 (27.5)	13 (32.5)	10 (25)	6 (15)	16 (40)	11 (27.5)	13 (32.5)	0	27 (33.75)	24 (30)	23 (28.75)	6 (7.5)
6	I find myself waiting for people to call or write	13 (32.5)	15 (37.5)	12 (30)	0	16 (40)	10 (25)	7 (17.5)	7 (17.5)	29 (36.25)	25 (31.25)	19 (23.75)	7 (8.75)
7	There is no one I can turn to	16 (40)	17 (42.5)	7 (17.5)	0	5 (12.5)	24 (60)	11 (27.5)	0	21 (26.25)	41 (51.25)	18 (22.5)	0
8	I am no longer close to anyone	17 (42.5)	12 (30)	9 (22.5)	2 (5)	9 (22.5)	22 (55)	3 (7.5)	6 (15)	26 (32.5)	34 (42.5)	12 (15)	8 (10)
9	My interests and ideas are not shared by those around me	9 (22.5)	22 (55)	7 (17.5)	2 (5)	21 (52.5)	6 (15)	11 (27.5)	2 (5)	30 (37.5)	28 (35)	18 (22.5)	4 (5)
10	I feel left out	16 (40)	11 (27.5)	9 (22.5)	4 (10)	6 (15)	20 (50)	7 (17.5)	7 (17.5)	22 (27.5)	31 (38.75)	16 (20)	11 (13.75)
11	I feel completely alone	10 (25)	19 (47.5)	9 (22.5)	2 (5)	6 (15)	21 (52.5)	6 (15)	7 (17.5)	16 (20)	40 (50)	15 (18.75)	9 (11.25)
12	I am unable to reach out and communicate with those around me	14 (35)	15 (37.5)	11 (27.5)	0	20 (50)	6 (15)	14 (35)	0	34 (42.5)	12 (26.25)	25 (31.25)	0
13	My social relationships are superficial	18 (45)	12 (30)	10 (25)	0	25 (62.5)	5 (12.5)	10 (25)	0	43 (53.75)	17 (21.25)	20 (25)	0
14	I feel starved for company	17 (42.5)	13 (32.5)	12 (30)	0	5 (12.5)	21 (52.5)	14 (35)	0	22 (27.5)	34 (42.5)	26 (32.5)	0
15	No one really knows me well	17 (42.5)	12 (30)	11 (27.5)	0	16 (40)	11 (27.5)	6 (15)	7 (17.5)	33 (41.25)	23 (28.75)	17 (21.25)	7 (8.75)
16	I feel isolated from others	15 (37.5)	11 (27.5)	12 (30)	2 (5)	0	29 (72.5)	4 (10)	7 (17.5)	15 (18.75)	40 (50)	16 (20)	9 (11.25)
17	I am unhappy being so withdrawn	19 (47.5)	8 (20)	13 (32.5)	0	16 (40)	12 (30)	5 (12.5)	7 (17.5)	35 (43.75)	20 (25)	18 (22.5)	7 (8.75)
18	It is difficult for me to make friends	20 (50)	10 (25)	10 (25)	0	16 (40)	13 (32.5)	4 (10)	7 (17.5)	36 (45)	23 (28.75)	14 (17.5)	7 (8.75)
19	I feel shut out and excluded by others	23 (57.5)	6 (15)	11 (27.5)	0	17 (42.5)	10 (25)	6 (15)	7 (17.5)	40 (50)	16 (20)	17 (21.25)	7 (8.75)
20	People are around me but not with me	19 (47.5)	7 (17.5)	12 (30)	2 (5)	16 (40)	11 (27.5)	6 (15)	7 (17.5)	35 (43.75)	18 (22.5)	18 (22.5)	9 (11.25)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage) N=Never, R= Rarely, S=Sometimes and O= Often

**Table 1(b) Distribution of the respondent on the basis of frequency of loneliness scale.**

Old age home (N=80)													
S. NO.	STATEMENTS	MALE				FEMALE				TOTAL			
		N	R	S	O	N	R	S	O	N	R	S	O
1	I am unhappy doing so many things alone	0	4 (10)	20 (50)	16 (40)	0	15 (37.5)	13 (32.5)	12 (30)	0	19 (23.75)	33 (41.25)	28 (35)
2	I have nobody to talk to	0	19 (47.5)	6 (15)	15 (37.5)	13 (32.5)	15 (37.5)	0	12 (30)	13 (16.25)	34 (42.5)	6 (7.5)	27 (33.75)
3	I cannot tolerate being so alone	0	11 (27.5)	16 (40)	13 (32.5)	23 (57.5)	1 (2.5)	16 (40)	0	23 (28.75)	12 (15)	32 (40)	13 (16.25)
4	I lack companionship	0	14 (35)	13 (32.5)	13 (32.5)	26 (65)	2 (5)	12 (30)	0	26 (32.5)	16 (20)	25 (31.25)	13 (16.25)
5	I feel as if nobody really understands me	0	14 (35)	14 (35)	12 (30)	11 (27.5)	17 (42.5)	12 (30)	0	11 (13.75)	31 (38.75)	26 (32.5)	12 (15)
6	I find myself waiting for people to call or write	0	8 (20)	18 (45)	14 (35)	13 (32.5)	14 (35)	1 (2.5)	12 (30)	13 (16.25)	22 (27.5)	19 (23.75)	26 (32.5)
7	There is no one I can turn -to	0	16 (40)	14 (35)	10 (25)	6 (15)	21 (52.5)	13 (32.5)	0	6 (7.5)	37 (46.25)	27 (33.75)	10 (12.5)
8	I am no longer close to anyone	0	12 (30)	25 (62.5)	3 (7.5)	10 (25)	17 (42.5)	1 (2.5)	12 (30)	10 (12.5)	29 (36.25)	26 (32.5)	15 (18.75)
9	My interests and ideas are not shared by those around me	0	21 (52.5)	12 (30)	7 (17.5)	17 (42.5)	10 (25)	13 (32.5)	0	17 (21.25)	31 (38.75)	25 (31.25)	7 (8.75)
10	I feel left out	0	14 (35)	14 (35)	12 (30)	17 (42.5)	10 (25)	1 (2.5)	12 (30)	17 (21.25)	24 (30)	15 (18.75)	24 (30)
11	I feel completely alone	0	7 (17.5)	17 (42.5)	16 (40)	13 (32.5)	15 (37.5)	0	12 (30)	13 (16.25)	22 (27.5)	17 (21.25)	28 (35)
12	I am unable to reach out and communicate with those around me	0	15 (37.5)	12 (30)	13 (32.5)	17 (42.5)	11 (27.5)	12 (30)	0	17 (21.25)	26 (32.5)	24 (30)	13 (16.25)
13	My social relationships are superficial	3 (7.5)	19 (47.5)	6 (15)	12 (30)	24 (60)	4 (10)	12 (30)	0	27 (33.75)	23 (28.75)	18 (22.5)	12 (15)
14	I feel starved for company	1 (2.5)	21 (52.5)	5 (12.5)	13 (32.5)	3 (7.5)	23 (57.5)	14 (35)	0	4 (5)	44 (55)	19 (23.75)	13 (16.25)
15	No one really knows me well	3 (7.5)	19 (47.5)	12 (30)	6 (15)	15 (37.5)	12 (30)	1 (2.5)	12 (30)	18 (22.5)	31 (38.75)	13 (16.25)	18 (22.5)
16	I feel isolated from others	1 (2.5)	13 (32.5)	24 (60)	2 (5)	1 (2.5)	27 (67.5)	0	12 (30)	2 (2.5)	40 (50)	24 (30)	14 (17.5)
17	I am unhappy being so withdrawn	-	15 (37.5)	19 (47.5)	6 (15)	17 (42.5)	9 (22.5)	2 (5)	12 (30)	17 (21.25)	24 (30)	21 (26.25)	18 (22.5)
18	It is difficult for me to make friends	3 (7.5)	15 (37.5)	10 (25)	12 (30)	10 (25)	17 (42.5)	1 (2.5)	12 (30)	13 (16.25)	32 (40)	11 (13.75)	24 (30)
19	I feel shut out and excluded by others	4 (10)	18 (45)	1 (2.5)	17 (42.5)	17 (42.5)	11 (27.5)	0	12 (30)	21 (26.25)	29 (36.25)	1 (1.25)	29 (36.25)
20	People are around me but not with me	1 (2.5)	13 (32.5)	10 (25)	16 (40)	11 (27.5)	16 (40)	1 (2.5)	12 (30)	12 (15)	29 (36.25)	11 (13.75)	28 (35)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage)  
N=Never, R= Rarely, S=Sometimes and O= Often.



**Fig: 1- Distribution of the respondent on the basis of score obtained on loneliness scale.**

Ho: 1. There exists no significant relationship between gender of elderly, loneliness and spiritual well- being.

**Table No. 2. T-test value between gender and loneliness.**

S.No.	STATEMENTS	Male		Female		T-value	P-value
1	I am unhappy doing so many things alone	1.94	.785	1.73	.826	1.667	.097
2	I have nobody to talk to	1.65	.929	1.26	1.122	2.379	.019
3	I cannot tolerate being so alone	1.48	.993	.73	.941	4.903	.000
4	I lack companionship	1.46	1.05	.71	.983	4.652	.000
5	I feel as if nobody really understands me	1.59	.964	.98	.811	4.349	.000
6	I find myself waiting for people to call or write	1.56	.966	1.21	1.177	2.056	.044
7	There is no one I can turn -to	1.31	.936	1.16	.645	1.180	.240
8	I- am no lo-nger close to anyone	1.34	.885	1.28	1.07	.401	.689
9	My interests and ideas are not shared by those around me	1.35	.829	.88	.933	3.406	.001
10	I feel left out	1.49	1.031	1.29	1.127	1.171	.243
11	I feel completely alone	1.65	.969	1.31	1.086	2.074	.040
12	I am unable to reach out and communicate with those around me	1.44	.966	.86	.882	3.932	.000
13	My social relationships are superficial	1.24	1.009	.66	.885	3.831	.000
14	I feel starved for company	1.29	.996	1.25	.626	.285	.776
15	No one really knows me well	1.19	.901	1.18	1.188	.075	.940
16	I feel isolated from others	1.35	.858	1.51	.871	-1.188	.236
17	I am unhappy being so withdrawn	1.31	.922	1.15	1.202	.959	.339
18	It is difficult for me to make friends	1.26	1.040	1.21	1.144	.289	.773
19	I feel shut out and excluded by others	1.24	1.139	1.13	1.205	.607	.545
20	People are around me but not with me	1.48	1.102	1.23	1.158	.966	.169

## DISCUSSION

In this study the above that 50 percent male and 50 percent female respondent in old age home and 50 percent male and 50 percent female in residing their home. There were total 160 respondents. The data in the table depicted that mostly respondents felt lonely residing in the old age home with psychological disorders whereas 41.25 percent respondents said they felt some times, unhappy doing so many things alone in the old age home. Whereas 7.5 percent respondents said that they felt some times, 42.5% respondent rarely, 33.75% respondents often and 16.25% never felt nobody to talk to in the old age home. Mostly respondents that felt they cannot tolerate being so alone there were 40% respondents felt some times, 28.75% felt never, 16.25% felt often and also 15%

respondents felt rarely who were living in old age home. Results found that male was felt more lonely rather than female.

The data in the above fig No. 1 shows that total 61.25 percent respondents having mild loneliness in their home there were 57.5 percent males and 65 percent females and total 31.25 percent respondents having mild loneliness in old age home there were 12.5 percent males and 50 percent females. Also total 27.5 percent respondents having moderate loneliness in their home there were 30 percent males and 25 percent females and total 36.25 percent respondents having moderate loneliness in old age home whereas 42.5 percent males and 30 percent females. Whereas total 11.25 percent respondents having sever loneliness in their home there were 12.5 percent males and 10 percent females and total 26 percent

respondents having sever loneliness in old age home there were 45 percent males and 20 percent females.

The data in the above table 2 shows that male was more felt lack companionship there mean was 1.46 and standard deviation 1.05, it was highly significant on the 0.01 level and also shown that they felt as if nobody really understands they there mean is 1.59 and standard deviation was .964 was high. It was highly significant on the 0.01 level. The result also shows that male suffered more loneliness rather than female.

### CONCLUSION

Loneliness is a complex and usually unpleasant emotional response to isolation or lack of companionship. Loneliness is a phenomenon that occurs in all stages of life and is a significant problem for many older people. Previous research has shown that loneliness in old age is a risk factor that can be linked to various health-related problems, physical and mental problems. Older people should make contact with another person or touch someone's life, spent time in prayer, relaxation and medication. Learn to become more self-sufficient. Avoid feeling sorry for yourself.

#### **Recommendation of the study**

- The similar type of research could be done across other variables like age, marital status and residence.

- The similar type of study could be done on large sample.
- The similar type of study could be done across type of psychological disorders.

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