

## SESSION 2991 (PAPER)

### LONELINESS AND ISOLATION IN LATER LIFE

#### AGE-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT, SOCIAL SUPPORT, SENSE OF COMMUNITY, AND LONELINESS OF KOREAN ADULTS

Miri Kim, and Soondool Chung, *Ewha Womans University, Seoul, Republic of Korea*

Abrupt industrialization, urbanization, and the emergence of the nuclear family have contributed to the increase of single-person households, placing an emphasis on individualization in society. Because of such changes, more people are living alone and feeling lonely, alienated from society and family. This research examined the association between loneliness and age-friendly environment, a community equipped with policies, settings, services, and structures that promote active ageing and aging-in-place, with the mediating roles of social support and sense of community. The study analyzed a total of 590 respondents aged 45 and above using data from the age integration survey conducted by the OO Research Institute of South Korea. Structural equation modelling and the bootstrapping method were applied. Age-friendly environment was positively associated with social support ( $\beta=0.310, p=0.000$ ) and sense of community ( $\beta=0.486, p=0.000$ ). Social support was negatively associated with loneliness ( $\beta=-0.195, p=0.000$ ). The full mediation effect of social support was observed in the pathway from age-friendly environment to loneliness (95% CI = [-0.112, -0.028]). Social support was fundamental in lowering loneliness, and age-friendly environment could only reduce loneliness by following a pathway that enhances social support. In other words, despite how well an age-friendly environment is established, it would not decrease an individual's loneliness unless it also enhances social support level. This finding sheds importance in maintaining satisfactory relationships that enable sharing of feelings, and fulfilling emotional and social needs in lowering loneliness. Measures to increase social support level within community are suggested.

#### SOCIAL ISOLATION AND LONELINESS: MODERATORS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SENSORY IMPAIRMENT AND COGNITION

Alison Huang,<sup>1</sup> George Rebok,<sup>2</sup> Bonnielin Swenor,<sup>2</sup> Jayant Pinto,<sup>3</sup> Linda Waite,<sup>3</sup> and Jennifer Deal,<sup>1</sup> 1. *Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Baltimore, Maryland, United States*, 2. *Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland, United States*, 3. *University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, United States*

Hearing and vision impairment have been independently linked to accelerated cognitive decline in older adults, however there is limited evidence on the effect of dual sensory impairment (DSI) (both hearing and vision impairment) on cognition. Additionally, the impact of social isolation and loneliness, both correlates of DSI and independent risk factors for cognitive decline, on the DSI-cognition relationship has yet to be studied. Using data from the National Social Life, Health, and Aging Project (N=3,091), multivariable linear regression

models were used to describe the cross-sectional relationship between self-reported functional sensory impairment (none, hearing only, vision only, DSI) and cognitive function, measured by the survey adapted Montreal Cognitive Assessment. We also included an interaction term in the model to investigate whether cognition is worse among older adults with sensory impairment who also are socially isolated or lonely. Participants in this sample are between 62-91 years with 15% reporting hearing impairment, 11% reporting vision impairment, and 7% reporting DSI. DSI was associated with significantly lower global cognitive function compared to no sensory impairment (-0.31 standard deviations (SD), 95% CI: -0.44 to -0.18), hearing impairment alone (-0.29 SD, 95% CI: -0.44 to -0.15), and vision impairment alone (-0.22 SD, 95% CI: -0.39 to -0.06). Furthermore, cognitive function was significantly worse among older adults with both DSI and smaller social networks ( $p$ -interaction  $<0.05$ ). No differences in the DSI-cognition relationship were observed by level of loneliness. These findings add to the limited research on the relationship between DSI, social isolation and loneliness, and cognition.

#### WHO WANTS TO BE ALONE? ANTECEDENTS OF MOTIVATION FOR SOLITUDE IN ADULTHOOD

Jing Yuan, and Daniel Grün, *North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina, United States*

Objectives: As an inevitable part of daily life, solitude has both positive and negative consequences which are moderated by one's motivation for solitude. Self-determined motivation correlates with few psychological risks, whereas other-determined motivation correlates with higher risks (e.g., loneliness, depression, lower well-being). However, little is known about the antecedents of different motivations for solitude. The purpose of this study is to investigate the antecedents of motivation for solitude in a sample with younger, middle-aged, and older adults. Methods: We recruited 468 participants from Amazon Mechanical Turk and Introduction to Psychology class (age range: 17-70,  $M = 30.7$ , 50.4 % females). Preference and motivation for solitude were measured with the Preference for Solitude Scale and Motivation for Solitude Scale-Short Form. Age, sex, marital status, education level, living arrangement, instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs), civic engagement, social contact frequency, introversion, and empathy were measured as antecedents. Results: People with older age, higher empathy for fictional characters, lower personal distress, higher introversion, and females tended to have higher general preference for solitude. People with higher empathy for fictional characters tended to have higher self-determined motivation. People with higher empathy for fictional characters, lower empathic concern, higher personal distress, higher IADLs, and higher introversion were more likely to have higher other-determined motivation. Discussion: A person with an introverted personality, functional limitation, more negative empathic reactions towards others are likely to have maladaptive motivation for solitude and may need intervention. Future research should further investigate other antecedents for self-determined motivation.