Loneliness Project 28/11/24

Proposed questionnaire measures

I’ve put together some proposed questionnaire measures so that we can explore relationships between loneliness and constructs that are conceptually related. Some of these might function as moderators of the relationship between loneliness and decreased prosociality and could help us build a model of how and for whom loneliness affects prosocial behaviour. Others might be useful as additional variables to provide scope for a range of projects examining these interrelated constructs.

We can also consider demographic variables to help identify vulnerability to loneliness (eg. international and domestic students).

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| Construct | Proposed measures | Comments |
| Social & Emotional loneliness  Coded Questionnaire Blocks/SELSA-S\_likert\_block. | Social & Emotional Loneliness Scale for Adults – Short Version (SELSA-S; DiTommaso et al., 2004) | Dimensional measure of loneliness comprising three subscales. Social loneliness (one subscale), reflecting perceived inadequacy of social networks and friendships, and emotional loneliness (two subscales), reflecting lack of emotionally close attachment relationships (such as with a romantic partner or family attachments). Based on Weiss’ (1973) distinction between social isolation, which can only be remedied by establishing adequate social relationships, and emotional isolation, which can only be remedied by establishing close emotional attachments. |
| Existential loneliness  Coded Questionnaire Blocks/BSEL\_likert\_block.js | Existential Isolation Scale (Pinel et al., 2017)  Brief Scale of Existential Loneliness (McKenna- Plumley et al., 2024) | The McKenna-Lumley scale is a 6-item unidimensional scale with good internal consistency and construct validity, to be used alongside other measures of loneliness. Existential isolation is conceptualised as perception of oneself as inherently separate from other people alongside feelings such as isolation, emptiness, and alienation. |
| General (unidimensional) loneliness  Coded Questionnaire Blocks/ULS\_likert\_block.js | UCLA Loneliness Scale (Russell et al., 1980) | Frequently used unidimensional measure of loneliness as a unitary, global experience. |
| Depression, anxiety, stress  Coded Questionnaire Blocks/DASS21\_likert\_block.js | DASS-21 | Dimensional measure of level of depression, anxiety and stress symptoms in the past week |
| Attachment to close friend/partner  Coded Questionnaire Blocks/ECR-R\_likert\_block.js | Experiences in Close Relationships – Revised (ECR-R; Fraley, Waller & Brennan 2000) | Measures dimensions of attachment avoidance and attachment anxiety and can be answered with respect to any close relationship, such as with a close friend or romantic partner. There are close conceptual links between attachment and emotional loneliness. |
| Purpose and meaning in life  Coded Questionnaire Blocks/MLQ\_likert\_block.js | Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ; Steger, et al., 2006) | 10-item measure, measures two dimensions: presence of meaning in life, and search for meaning in life. |
| Social adjustment to university  Coded Questionnaire Blocks/SACQ\_likert\_block.js | College Adjustment Questionnaire (CAQ: O’Donnell et al., 2018)  Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ; Baker & Siryk, 1984) | The experience of loneliness might be a common or even normative aspect of social adjusting to university, given the challenges of this transition for many. |
| Prosociality  Coded Questionnaire Blocks/PS\_likert\_block.js | Prosociality Scale (Caprara et al., 2005) | A recent cross-national validation and psychometric study (Luengo Kanacri et al., 2021) provided evidence for a general (latent) factor of prosocial responding (prosociality) and two specific factors (prosocial actions and prosocial feelings). This measure appears to be developmentally informed. |
| Experiences of solitude  Not included. | I haven’t found a survey measure of this construct. Researchers have tended to generate their own measure using vignettes and custom questions. | Recent research (Ren et al. 2024) identifies variability in the perceived value and importance of solitude. The variability in valuing solitude depends on individual differences (eg. personality traits) and on the functions of solitude. They identified 6 functions of solitude:   1. Solitude for emotion regulation 2. Solitude to avoid unpleasant interactions 3. Solitude as concentration 4. Solitude as relaxation 5. Solitude as self-reflection 6. Solitude as independence   As far as I am aware there is scant research on the relationship between loneliness and people’s experience of solitude. I would imagine that lonely people are less likely to value solitude, or to be comfortable in solitude. |
| Perceived social support  Coded Questionnaire Blocks/PSS\_likert\_block.js | Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS; Zimet et al. 1988) | Three sub-scales addressing different sources of perceived support: family, friends, significant other. |
| Emotion regulation  Coded Questionnaire Blocks/DERS\_likert\_block.js | Difficulties in Emotion Regulation scale (DERS; Gratz & Roemer 2004) | Loneliness can be conceptualised as an upsetting emotional experience. It would be interesting to examine how loneliness relates to emotion regulation. |
| Theory of Mind Inventory  Removed – per Wed 6 Feb discussion. |  |  |
| Interpersonal Reactivity Index  Coded Questionnaire Blocks/IRI\_liker\_block.js |  |  |
| Student Adjustment to College Questionnaire (SACQ)  Coded Questionnaire Blocks/SACQ\_likert\_block.js |  |  |
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