

Reproducible Research Project

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1 Introduction

A growing number of studies point to the ways that aging can be associated with loneliness, as well as the detrimental effects it has on well-being. A three-item loneliness scale was developed for us in large, national surveys (Hughes, Waite, Hawkey & Cacioppo, 2004). This scale is used in the Health and Retirement Study (HRS).

This project utilizes data from three waves of the HRS. It seeks to explore the associations between debt and loneliness for adults 50 years and older.

2 Summary Stats

Two measures of debt are used, an objective and a subjective measure. The objective debt measure is a solvency ratio, which is a ratio of total debt to total assets. The subjective debt measure is a scale from one to five of the difficulty of repaying bills for the respondent. The loneliness scale is the sum of responses to the three loneliness items and ranges from three to nine, with higher scores indicating greater loneliness.

	Average	Minimum	Maximum
Loneliness	7.69	3.00	9.00
Solvency Ratio	29.43	0.00	50000.00
Difficulty Paying Bills	1.87	1.00	5.00

Table 1: Summary Statistics

2.1 Frequency of Loneliness Scores

The following is a histogram of the loneliness scores reported across three waves of the HRS.

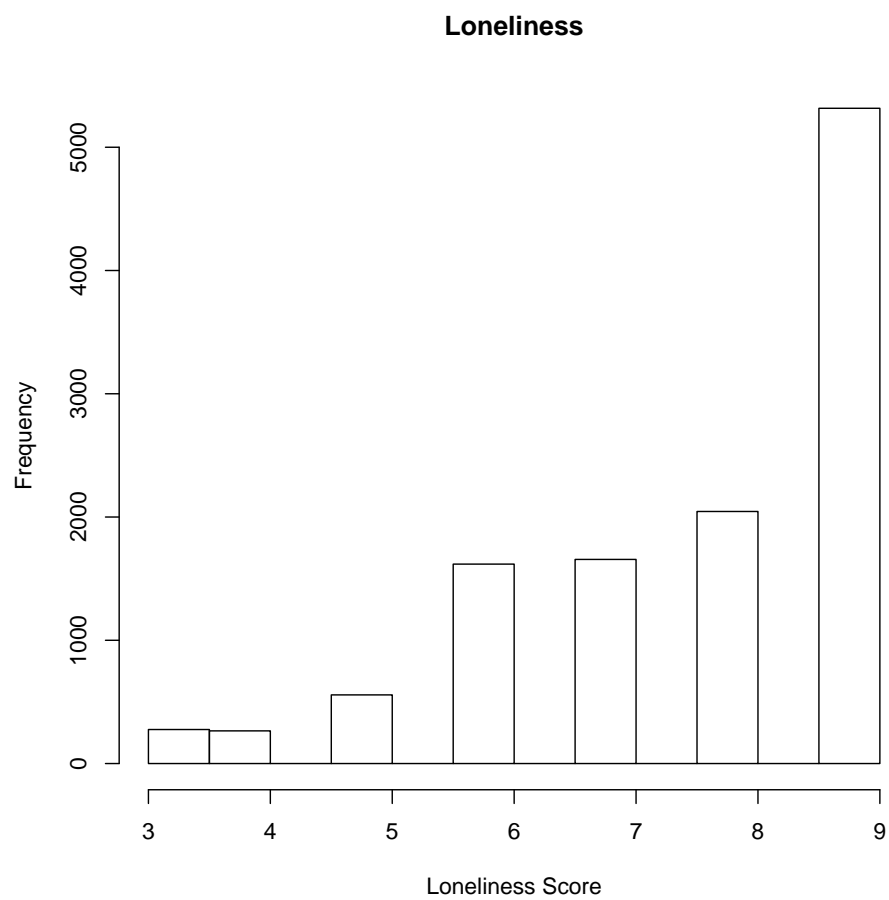


Figure 1: This is an example parabola.

References

- Hughes, M. E., Waite, L. J., Hawkley, L. C. & Cacioppo, J. T. (2004). A short scale for measuring loneliness in large surveys: Results from two population-based studies. *Research on aging*, 26(6), 655–672.