

Soledad. Investigación, intervención y evaluación del impacto

Sara Marsillas – Matia Instituto

"Investigación e innovación en envejecimiento.
Avances para una sociedad longeva",
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1. Acercamientos a la soledad

- La experiencia de soledad no es ajena para la mayoría de las personas, bien por experiencia propia o cercana. Pero... ¿significa lo mismo para todas?

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1. Acercamientos a las soledades

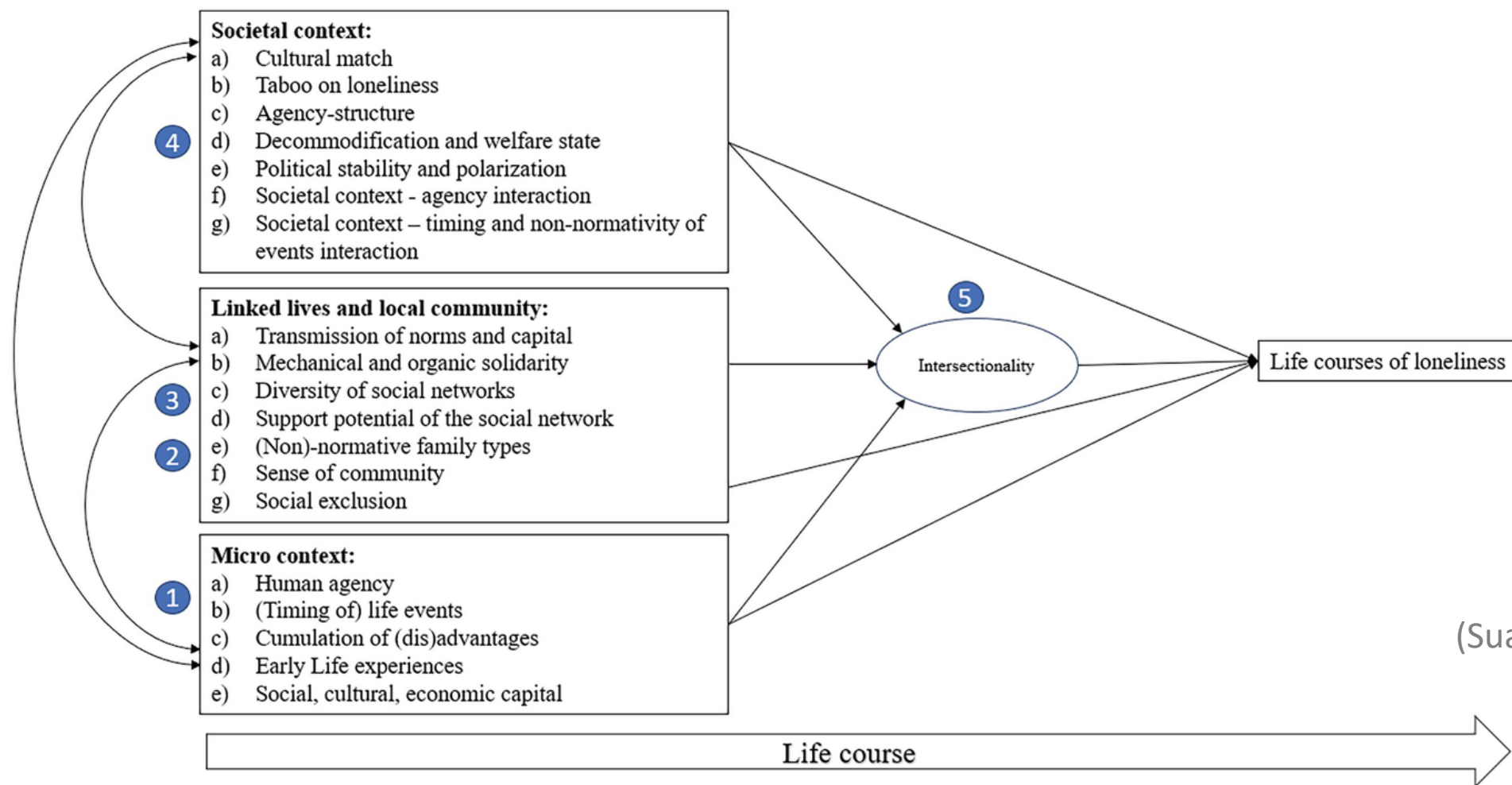
Gran parte de la evidencia empírica se vincula a la teoría de la discrepancia cognitiva (Perlman y Peplau, 1982; De Jong Gierveld, 1998).

Consecuencia:

Enfoque que ha centrado sus causas en el individuo

‘Microficción’ de la soledad

1. Acercamientos a las soledades



(Suanet y Aatrsen, 2025).

2. El reto de medir un intangible

Su prevalencia de la soledad oscila entre el 21,2% y el 59,3%, dependiendo del método de medición utilizado (Stegen et al., 2024).

Las mediciones son fundamentales para la investigación → sirven de base para nuestras conclusiones y recomendaciones.

Es, por tanto, esencial comprender su calidad y sus limitaciones para hacer una adecuada selección de la metodología disponible.

2. El reto de medir un intangible

- Dos aproximaciones metodológicas principales
 - Medida de ítem único autoinformado (directa)
 - Medidas agregadas o escalas (indirectas)

Pregunta directa

UCLA
De Jong Gierveld

2. El reto de medir un intangible

Review

How (Not) to Measure Loneliness: A Review of the Eight Most Commonly Used Scales

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Abstract: Loneliness affects well-being and has long-term negative impacts on physical and mental health, educational outcomes, and employability. Because of those current and long-term impacts, loneliness is a significant issue for which we need reliable and appropriate measurement scales. In the current paper, psychometric properties of the eight most commonly used loneliness scales are reviewed both descriptively and meta-analytically. Results suggest that for many of the scales, the psychometric properties are promising. However, for some psychometric features, especially test-retest reliability and measurement invariance, evidence is rather scarce. Most striking, however, is the fact that all of the scales included items that do not measure loneliness. Surprisingly, for many (sub)scales, this was even the case for about half of the items. Because our measures are the foundation of our research work, it is crucial to improve the way loneliness is being measured.

Keywords: loneliness; measurement; psychometrics; factor structure; reliability; measurement invariance; loneliness types



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- Los instrumentos más usados contienen ítems que no miden estrictamente soledad.
- En algunos casos cerca de la mitad de los ítems podrían estar capturando otros fenómenos.

2. El reto de medir un intangible

Article

Would the Real Loneliness Please Stand Up? The Validity of Loneliness Scores and the Reliability of Single-Item Scores

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Antonia Gutzeit², Isabel Jaki², and Pamela Qualter⁴

Abstract

Several measures that assess loneliness have been developed for adults. Across three studies, we investigated psychometric features of scores of different versions of the Rasch-Type Loneliness Scale, the University of California Los Angeles Loneliness Scale, and three single-item measures. In Study 1 ($N = 697$ self-ratings, $N = 282$ informant-ratings of 160 targets) and Study 2 ($N = 1,216$ individuals from 608 couples), we investigated convergent validity, self-informant agreement, and nomological nets of the item scores using correlates related to demographic aspects, personality, satisfaction, and network characteristics. In Study 3 ($N = 411$), we estimated a reliability of $r_{\alpha} > .70$ for scores of three single-item measures of loneliness. Overall, scores of all measures and their nomological nets were highly correlated within and across studies, indicating that the scores of the included measures are all reliable and valid. Recommendations for choosing a loneliness measure are discussed.

Keywords

loneliness, Rasch-Type Loneliness Scale, University of California Los Angeles Loneliness Scale, single-item measures, validity, nomological net, self-other agreement

Humans are social beings, and they rely and depend on each other (Axelrod & Hamilton, 1981; Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Interpersonal relationships are among the most powerful sources for well-being and health (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; S. Cohen, 2004; Hartup & Stevens, 1997; House et al., 1988). When interpersonal relationships are perceived as deficient regarding quantitative (e.g., network size, number of friends) and/or qualitative aspects (e.g., relationship closeness, trust, intimacy), individuals experience loneliness (Ernst & Cacioppo, 1999; Perlman & Peplau, 1981).

The large body of literature on loneliness that has accumulated is very consistent in demonstrating the negative effects of loneliness on health-related outcomes (for reviews, see Cacioppo et al., 2015; Ernst & Cacioppo, 1999; Hawkey & Cacioppo, 2010; Hawkey & Capitanio, 2015; Heinrich & Gullone, 2006; Holt-Lunstad et al., 2015) and interpersonal outcomes (Cacioppo et al., 2017; Lodder et al., 2017; Mund et al., 2022; Mund & Johnson, 2021; Spithoven et al., 2018). This consistency is to be highlighted given the multitude of loneliness measures that have been developed over the last decades, including unidimensional and multidimensional multi-item scales, various abbreviated versions thereof, and a variety of single-item measures. Although issues of validity have been investigated in prior

research, these studies are limited in that they (a) have examined either convergent validity between item scores, but not their correlations with external variables (e.g., Cacioppo, Hawkey, et al., 2006; Grygiel et al., 2013; Iecovich, 2013; Maes et al., 2017; D. Russell et al., 1980), (b) examined the nomological net of scores of only one or two measures at once (Cacioppo, Hawkey, et al., 2006; Shiovitz-Ezra & Ayalon, 2012; Victor et al., 2005), and, when doing so, (c) mostly only considered demographic variables such as age, gender, and education as external correlates of loneliness (Borys & Perlman, 1985; Shiovitz-Ezra & Ayalon, 2012; Victor et al., 2005). Thus, it is unclear whether item scores of different loneliness measures for

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- ¿Escalas largas o una sola pregunta?
- Estos autores muestran que las distintas medidas de soledad presentan elevadas correlaciones entre sí y que las medidas de un solo ítem tienen una fiabilidad aceptable (pero se pierden matices).
- Ahora bien, recomiendan incluir múltiples medidas siempre que sea posible para contrastar los resultados.

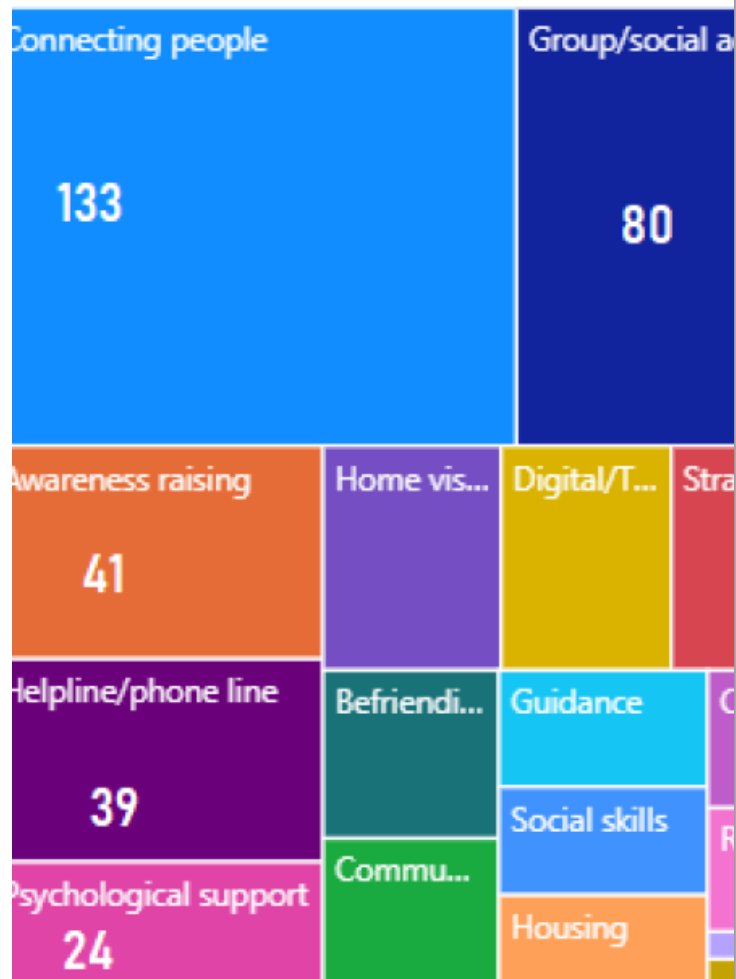
3. Intervenciones para el abordaje de la soledad

- Planteamiento:

- Si la soledad se define como la experiencia emocional desagradable que se produce cuando la red de relaciones sociales de una persona es deficiente para ella, sea en calidad o en cantidad.
- Entonces la forma de reducir esta experiencia requiere:



3. Intervenciones para el abordaje de la soledad



4. Evaluación del impacto de las intervenciones

Tras analizar 280 estudios de intervención encontró efectos consistentes de reducción de la soledad tanto a corto como a medio plazo. Los tamaños del efecto son pequeños a moderados, pero robustos.

Las intervenciones psicológicas son las que presentan los efectos más sólidos → mejora los aspectos que perpetúan la experiencia individual

Estas conclusiones cuestionan el planteamiento de que la soledad se resuelve simplemente aumentando el número de relaciones.



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Are Loneliness Interventions Effective for Reducing Loneliness? A Meta-Analytic Review of 280 Studies

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Loneliness is increasingly recognized as a critical public health concern, with growing evidence of the effectiveness of interventions to reduce loneliness across the lifespan. This preregistered systematic review and meta-analysis evaluated the effectiveness of interventions to reduce loneliness. The systematic review identified 312 studies. The meta-analysis included 280 studies (273 studies of short-term effects; 72 studies of long-term effects). Using random-effects models, a small to moderate short-term effect on loneliness (up to 4 weeks after the intervention) was observed (122 randomized controlled trials; standardized mean difference = -0.50 , 95% confidence interval [-0.60 , -0.39]; 33 multicohort studies; standardized mean difference = -0.51 , 95% confidence interval [-0.68 , -0.34]; 118 single-arm cohort studies; standardized mean difference = -0.38 , 95% confidence interval [-0.46 , -0.30]). Confidence in the estimates was assessed using the Grading of Recommendations, Assessment, Development, and Evaluation system and graded as low or very low. No statistically significant differences were found between age groups. Psychological interventions appeared to be the most effective intervention strategy for reducing loneliness, demonstrating a moderate effect, while social and emotional skills training, social network interventions, and social support interventions showed small to moderate effects. Further analyses demonstrated that long-term effects (1–6 months after the intervention) were comparable to short-term effects. The current meta-analysis provides overall evidence of the effectiveness of loneliness interventions. Given methodological limitations, it remains unclear whom the interventions would help the most. Overall, there is a need for rigorous and high-quality development and further evaluation of interventions for loneliness.

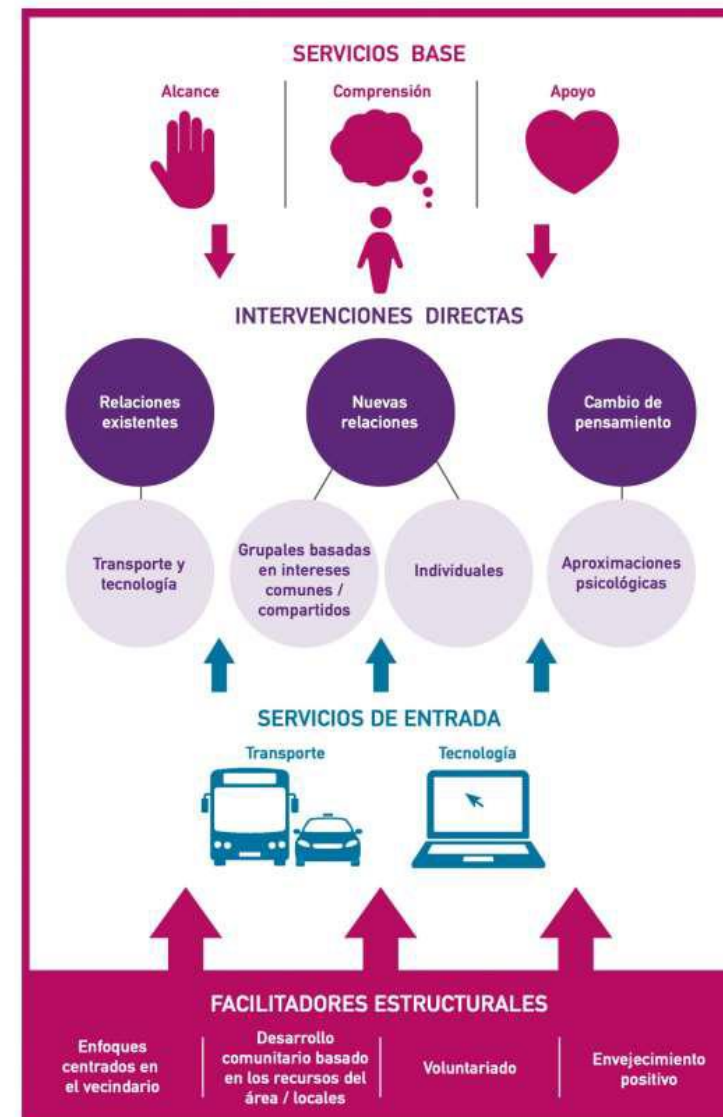
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continued

4. Evaluación del impacto de las intervenciones

- Se concluye que no hay una 'talla única' que valga para todas las personas



4. Evaluación del impacto de las intervenciones

- Factores comunes a las intervenciones con mayor impacto
 - Personalización y adecuación al contexto
 - Autonomía para influir en la trayectoria de la intervención
 - Altas habilidades y formación específica en profesionales y personas voluntarias
 - Construir sobre las relaciones de las que las personas disponen
 - Desarrollar habilidades sociales y autoestima

(Cattan et al., 2005; Findlay, 2003; Fokkema y Van Tilburg, 2007; Masi et al., 2011; Schoenmakers et al., 2014).

5. ¿En qué precisamos avanzar?

Medición

Definición de umbrales (soledad / no soledad)
Equivalencia entre escalas
Significado práctico de las puntuaciones
Tipologías: soledad persistente, existencial

Intervención

Detección y alcance
Comprender qué mecanismo produce el cambio, para quién funciona y cuándo funciona
Enfoque multinivel: intervenciones individuales,
intervenciones comunitarias,
intervenciones estructurales y políticas.
Entender qué significan los cambios cuantitativos en la vida de las personas

Antes de decidir qué intervención funciona mejor, todavía necesitamos saber con mayor precisión **qué estamos midiendo cuando decimos que estamos midiendo soledad.**

(Maes et al., 2022)



Gracias por su atención

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vivir con sentido

¡Síguenos!



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