Loneliness among functionally disabled elderly

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Abstract
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. The main purpose of this study is to gain the attention of people regarding the problem of elderly having functionally disabled disease, problem and loneliness physical problem. Aim of this study to identify loneliness and functionally disabled physical, visual, hearing elderly. The research design of the study was descriptive design. The sample size was 120 (60 respondents in male and 60 respondent female). The sampling tools and techniques was self–constructed and Pre-tested interview schedule along with Loneliness scale by “UCLA Loneliness scale” Published by –Peplau R.D. and Perguson M.L (1978).

Keywords: Functionally disabled, loneliness, elderly

1. Introduction
Loneliness according to many experts is not necessarily about being alone, instead, it is the perception of being alone and isolated that matters most. For example, a college fresher might feel lonely despite being surrounded by roommates and other peers. A soldier beginning his military career might feel lonely after being deployed to a foreign country, despite being constantly surrounded by other people. Loneliness is a complex and usually unpleasant emotional response to isolation or lack of companionship. Loneliness typically includes anxious feelings about a lack of connectedness or communality with other beings, both in the present and extending into the future. As such, loneliness can be felt even when surrounded by other people; the causes of loneliness are varied and include social, mental or emotional factors. Loneliness is widely prevalent throughout society among people in marriages, relationships, families and successful careers. It has been a long explored theme in the literature of human beings since classical antiquity. Loneliness has also been described as social pain- a psychological mechanism meant to alert an individual of isolation and motivate him/her to seek social connections. (Byock .2013) [1] In many parts of the developing world, chronological time has little or no importance in the meaning of old age. Other socially constructed meaning of the age are more significant such as the roles assigned to older people; in some cases it is the loss of roles accompanying physical decline which in significant in defining old age. Thus, in contrast to the chronological milestones which mark life stage in the developed world, old age in many developing countries is seen to begin at the point when active contribution is no longer possible. Loneliness is a complex and usually unpleasant emotional response to isolation or lack of companionship. Loneliness typically includes anxious feelings about a lack of connectedness or communality with other beings, both in the present and extending into the future. As such, loneliness are varied and include social, mental or emotional factors

Loneliness can be described as a growing chronic disease without redeeming features which have long being recognized as a strong correlate of deprive symptoms. Loneliness is a common, universal human experience with emotional cognitive, motivational, and behavioural dimensions, and has various types and degree- Weiss identified two types of loneliness (a) emotional loneliness (b) social loneliness. The broadly accepted definition of loneliness is the distress that result from discrepancy. Perspective makes it clear that loneliness is not synonymous with being alone, non does being with others guarantee protection from feeling of loneliness. Rather, loneliness is the distressing feeling that occurs when one’s social relationship are perceived as being less satisfying than what is desired. (Peplau L.A 2011)[6]
1.1 Objective: To study loneliness among functionally disabled elderly.

1.2 Hypothesis
Ho1: There exists no relationship between age group and loneliness.

Ho2: There exists no relationship between types of functional disability and loneliness.

2. Materials and Methods
This study was conducted in Lucknow city of Uttar Pradesh, India. The study was carried out among functionally disabled elderly over the age of 60 years. The total sample size was 120 elderly (60 male and 60 female). Pretested interview schedule along with “UCLA Loneliness scale” Published by Peplau R.D. and Ferguson M.L (1978) was used to collect data. Purposive random sampling method has used to collect data.

3. Results and Discussion

Table 1: (A) Distribution of the respondent according to age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Male N=60</th>
<th>Female N=60</th>
<th>Total N=120</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60-65</td>
<td>22(36.66)</td>
<td>30(50)</td>
<td>53(44.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66-70</td>
<td>30(50)</td>
<td>19(31.66)</td>
<td>49(40.83)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71-75</td>
<td>4(6.66)</td>
<td>8(13.33)</td>
<td>12(10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 75</td>
<td>2(3.33)</td>
<td>4(6.66)</td>
<td>6(5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage

From the above table it was revealed that the chi- square value was found significant thus null hypothesis was rejected. This means that there exists a significant relationship between loneliness and age group of respondent.

Ho-2: There exists no relationship between type of functional disability and loneliness.

Table 2: Chi square value between type of functional disability and loneliness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.N</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Chi-square</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Significant value</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Age(in years) Loneliness</td>
<td>9.340</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.025</td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table 2 revealed that the chi square value was found non significant at 50% level of significant thus null hypothesis was accepted which means there exists no relation between of type of functional disability and loneliness of the respondent.
4. Conclusion
The ageing process is of course a biological reality which has its own dynamic, largely beyond human control. However, it is also subject to the constructions by which each society makes sense of old age. In the developed world, chronological time plays a paramount role. The age of 60 or 56, roughly equivalent to retirement ages in most developed countries is said to be the beginning of old age.

5. References