



Scuola universitaria professionale
della Svizzera italiana



Discussioni intorno al concetto di active ageing: origini, misurazioni e traiettorie di sviluppo da una prospettiva critica e di genere

Scuola Universitaria Professionale della Svizzera Italiana
20 dicembre 2022 | 10.30

L'evento inizierà a breve

Ai sensi dell'art. 13 del Regolamento (UE) 2016/679 si comunica che l'evento sarà registrato, e che al termine dell'evento, al fine di renderne fruibili i contenuti ai terzi anche in momenti successivi, la registrazione audio-video può essere resa disponibile su uno o canali social del progetto e/o degli enti capofila e partner.



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PROGRAMMA

10.30-11:00 SALUTI E INTRODUZIONE

Stefano Cavalli [Scuola Universitaria Professionale della Svizzera Italiana]

Emanuela Sala [Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca]

11.00-11:30 DALLA CONCETTUALIZZAZIONE ALLA OPERATIVIZZAZIONE DEL CONCETTO DI ACTIVE AGEING

Daniele Zaccaria [Scuola Universitaria Professionale della Svizzera Italiana]

Stefano Cereghetti [Scuola Universitaria Professionale della Svizzera Italiana]

11.30-12:00 ACTIVE AGEING & GENDER

Federica Cretazzo [Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca]

12:00-12:30 UNA DISCUSSIONE CRITICA DEL CONCETTO DI ACTIVE AGEING

DALLA PROSPETTIVA DELL'INCLUSIONE SOCIALE

Emma Garavaglia [Politecnico di Milano]

12:30-14:00 LUNCH BREAK

14.00-14:30 IS INTERNET USE A PROTECTIVE FACTOR AGAINST THE RISK OF OLD-AGE LONELINESS DURING THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK?

Federica Cretazzo [Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca]

14:30-15:00 IL PROGETTO AGE-INT

Elia Pusterla [Scuola Universitaria Professionale della Svizzera Italiana]

15:00-15:30 DISCUSSIONE ORGANIZZATIVA ACTIVE-IT



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Emanuela Sala, Federica Cretazzo, Daniele Zaccaria

*Is Internet use a protective factor against the risk of
old-age loneliness during the COVID-19 outbreak?*



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1. Introduction

Italy was **the first** Western country hit by the COVID-19 outbreak

* Very strict **lockdown** and **social distancing** measures

➔ **Loneliness** as one of the main consequences, especially for **older people**

➔ **Internet** as a means to **contrast loneliness**

2. Empirical context: introduction

Internet use, especially with communication purposes, may lead to a **reduction** in **older age loneliness** (e.g., Sum *et al.* 2008)

* Still **little research** on **Internet use**, **older age loneliness**, COVID-19

➔ **Two main research strands:**

1. **The role of virtual/in person contacts** on **older people's loneliness** during the pandemic (e.g., Atzendorf and Gruber 2021, Cohn-Schwartz *et al.* 2021, Skalacka and Grzegorz 2021)

2. **The role of Internet use** on **older people's loneliness** during the pandemic

2. Empirical context: second research strand

Overall, **Internet use may reduce loneliness in older age** during the COVID-19 outbreak

* However,

- **No associations** were observed for **people aged 70 and over** (Bonsaksen *et al.* 2021)
- Positive impact may depend on **older people's socio-economic status (SES)** and **type of apps used** (Herron *et al.* 2021, Llorente-Barroso *et al.* 2021; Yang *et al.* 2022)

* **Limitations:**

- Qualitative studies with **small** samples (*e.g.*, Gauthier *et al.* 2022; Llorente-Barroso *et al.* 2021)
- Quantitative studies on **self-selected** samples (*e.g.*, Bonsaksen *et al.* 2021; Horst *et al.* 2021)
- **Single** country (*e.g.*, Herron *et al.* 2021; Horst *et al.* 2021; Yang *et al.* 2022)
- **No focus on gender**
- **No causality**/only associations

3. Aim

Explore the association between **Internet use** and **older men and women's loneliness** during the COVID-19 outbreak in Italy (first lockdown), with a special focus on **gender**, using large scale **probability-based** survey data

Loneliness is the subjective feeling of isolation accompanied by the perception of a deficiency in the desired number or quality of social relations (Peplau and Perlman 1982).

4. Methods: data



SHARE COVID-19 Wave 8

- * Data collection: June – August 2020
- * Interviewing mode: CATI
- * Questionnaire content: COVID-19 related change (e.g., **loneliness** before and after the COVID-19 outbreak)
- * Analytical sample: Italians aged 65+ (n = 2,685)

4. Methods: analytical techniques

Descriptive statistics

- * Chi-squared test

Multinomial logistic regression

- * Controls for groups of variables
- * Separate models for men and women
- * Estimates: average marginal effects (AMEs)
- * Robustness checks:
 - Variance inflation factor (VIF) and tolerance criterion to check for multicollinearity
 - Hausman test to check for equality between Internet use coefficients of men and women
- * Statistical software: Stata 17.0

4. Methods: variables

- * **Dependent variable: Loneliness** (derived variable based on **feeling of loneliness** at the time of the interview and **change in loneliness levels**, compared to the pre-pandemic times)
 - No feelings of loneliness reported
 - No change in loneliness level
 - Increased loneliness

- * **Independent variable: Internet use** during the past 7 days (yes/no),

- * **Control variables:** three groups
 1. Socio-demographic indicators, *i.e.*, age, education, household size
 2. Health conditions, *i.e.*, physical health, mental health
 3. Contacts frequency *i.e.*, frequency of social contacts, frequency of electronic contacts

5. Results: loneliness

	Total	
	<i>Internet use</i>	
	No	Yes
<i>Loneliness</i>		
No feeling of loneliness reported	50.76	69.70
No change in loneliness level	24.13	12.66
Increased loneliness level	25.11	17.63
Total	100.00	100.00
N	1,840	845

Notes: Total (N = 6,825). Pearson chi2(2) = 87.9635. Pr = 0.000.

Source: Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE), Corona Survey 1.

5. Results: loneliness by gender

	Male		Female	
	<i>Internet use</i>		<i>Internet use</i>	
	No	Yes	No	Yes
<i>Loneliness</i>				
No feeling of loneliness reported	60.92	76.89	43.24	60.43
No change in loneliness level	19.54	10.29	27.53	15.72
Increased loneliness level	19.54	12.82	29.23	23.85
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
N	783	476	1,057	369

Notes: Male (N = 1,259): Pearson chi2(2) = 35.0011. Pr = 0.000. Female (N = 1,426). Pearson chi2(2) = 35.4086. Pr = 0.000.

Source: Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE), Corona Survey 1.

5. Results: no feeling of loneliness reported

Men						Women					
No feeling of loneliness reported						No feeling of loneliness reported					
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5		Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
AMEs	.159***	.113***	.098***	.162***	.084**	AMEs	.171***	.105***	.104***	.182***	.077**
Controls						Controls					
I		✓			✓	I		✓			✓
II			✓		✓	II			✓		✓
III				✓	✓	III				✓	✓
N	1,267	1,260	1,266	1,267	1,259	N	1,437	1,429	1,434	1,437	1,426

Notes: Models are estimated using Stata's mlogit command. Controls are: (I) age, education, household size; (II) physical health, mental health (III) frequency of social contacts, frequency of electronic contacts; (IV) all variables (age, education, household size, physical health, mental health, frequency of social contacts, frequency of electronic contacts). Significance levels: * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001.

Source: Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE), Corona Survey 1, 2020.

5. Results: no change in loneliness level

Men						Women					
No change in loneliness level						No change in loneliness level					
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5		Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
AMEs	-.092***	-.066**	-.063**	-.083***	-.047*	AMEs	-.115***	-.085**	-.095**	-.103***	-.066*
Controls						Controls					
I		✓			✓	I		✓			✓
II			✓		✓	II			✓		✓
III				✓	✓	III				✓	✓
N	1,267	1,260	1,266	1,267	1,259	N	1,437	1,429	1,434	1,437	1,426

Notes: Models are estimated using Stata's mlogit command. Controls are: (I) age, education, household size; (II) physical health, mental health (III) frequency of social contacts, frequency of electronic contacts; (IV) all variables (age, education, household size, physical health, mental health, frequency of social contacts, frequency of electronic contacts). Significance levels: * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001.

Source: Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE), Corona Survey 1, 2020.

5. Results: increased loneliness level

Men						Women					
Increased loneliness level						Increased loneliness level					
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5		Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
AMEs	-.067***	-.046*	-.035	-.078***	-.037	AMEs	-.055*	-.019	-.009	-.079**	-.011
Controls						Controls					
I		✓			✓	I		✓			✓
II			✓		✓	II			✓		✓
III				✓	✓	III				✓	✓
N	1,267	1,260	1,266	1,267	1,259	N	1,437	1,429	1,434	1,437	1,426

Notes: Models are estimated using Stata's mlogit command. Controls are: (I) age, education, household size; (II) physical health, mental health (III) frequency of social contacts, frequency of electronic contacts; (IV) all variables (age, education, household size, physical health, mental health, frequency of social contacts, frequency of electronic contacts). Significance levels: * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001.

Source: Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE), Corona Survey 1, 2020.

6. Conclusion

** Internet use may be a protective factor against old-age loneliness **No feelings of loneliness reported**

** No gender differences

** No moderating roles of control variables

No change in loneliness level



** **Internet use did not protect from further loneliness worsening**

6. Conclusion

There is an association between Internet use and old-age loneliness of men and women during the first lockdown in Italy

The association between Internet use and increased loneliness is moderated by health for older men and also by socio-demographic conditions for older women during the first lockdown in Italy

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Thanks for your attention