

Resumen

En la actualidad, el envejecimiento poblacional es un hecho y una preocupación. En relación a esta situación surge el "aging in place", este hace referencia a la preferencia de las personas mayores por seguir viviendo en sus propias casas, con cierto nivel de independencia. Sin embargo, ésto es considerado un factor de riesgo de soledad.

Por otra parte, el envejecimiento es diferente, a todos los niveles, entre hombres y mujeres.

Por este motivo, en el presente trabajo se pretende comprobar si existen diferencias significativas en el sentimiento de soledad de personas mayores, por una parte, en función del sexo y , por otra parte, de la convivencia, es decir, de si viven solas o no.

Con este objetivo, a partir de una muestra de 216 personas mayores residentes en Castellón, con media de edad de 68 años, a las que se les había administrado la Escala de Soledad de Jong Gierveld, se realizó un análisis estadístico, concretamente, la prueba T para comparación de medias independientes de las que se obtuvo los siguientes resultados: No existe significación en cuanto a las diferencias por sexo, pero si por convivencia, en particular, es la soledad emocional la que se ve afectada por este factor.

Además, como la literatura indica que éste sentimiento se relaciona con problemas de salud, una posible investigación sería un estudio longitudinal para establecer medidas y minimizar dicha realidad.

Abstract

Today, population ageing is a fact and a concern. In relation to this situation arises the "aging in place", this refers to the preference of older people to continue living in their own homes, with a certain level of independence. However, this is considered a risk factor for loneliness.

On the other hand, ageing is different, at all levels, between men and women.

For this reason, in the present work is intended to check whether there are significant differences in the feeling of loneliness of older people, on the one hand, in terms of sex and, on the other hand, coexistence, It means, whether they live alone or not.

With this objective, from a sample of 216 elderly people living in Castellón, with an average age of 68 years, who had been administered the Jong Gierveld's Lonliness scale, a statistical analysis was conducted, specifically, the T test for comparison of independent means of which the following results were obtained: there is No significance as to the differences by sex, but if by coexistence, in particular, it is the emotional loneliness that is affected by this factor.

Moreover, as the literature indicates that this feeling is related to health problems, a possible investigation would be a longitudinal study to establish measures and minimize that reality.

Evaluation of the level of loneliness in a sample of elderly people living in Castellón.

INTRODUCTION

United Nations (2017) and OMS (2015) have been alerting for some time that population ageing is a current global phenomenon. One aspect of this process of population ageing that deserves attention is the social phenomenon called "aging in place" or "aging at Home", which refers to the preference of older people to continue living in their own homes, with a certain level of Independence instead of living in a residence (Davey, Nana, de Joux & Arcus, 2004).

The fact that a person living alone in old age has been considered as one of the main risk Factors of loneliness (KOC, 2012). Human are social beings and as such we feel the need to relate, interact with others and establish links. The lack of other people around us causes as many health problems as those derived from continued psychological stress (Pinazo & Bellengarde, 2018). In this sense, and relating to the "aging in place", it is necessary to clarify two concepts: Isolation and loneliness, since it is common wrong and understand them jointly.

Isolation is characterized by the lack of lasting interpersonal relationships while the feeling of loneliness is subjective and composed by the way a person perceives, experiences and evaluates his or her own social isolation and lack of communication with others (de Jong-Gierveld & Raadschelders, 1982). Unlike the experience of solitude, social isolation is an objective measure of poor social integration, which does not depend on a subjective assessment of the person (Luanaigh & Lawlor, 2008).

There are obvious differences between "being alone" or "living alone" and "feeling alone." Luanaigh and Lawlor (2008) affirm that while the experience of feeling alone is always associated with something unwanted, being alone can be a desired experience to foster creativity, facilitate self-reflection, self-regulation, concentration and learning. The feeling of loneliness arises in cases where social isolation is imposed from the outside, forcing the person to live/be alone against their desires; But when social isolation is a voluntary one does not manifest a feeling of loneliness (Castro, 2010).

Moreover, according to Neri (2014), they don't age equal men that women, and don't refer only to the level of pathology. Gender differences in age are notable at the demographic level and also in socioeconomic conditions

For all these reasons, the objective that arises in the present work is to check if there are significant differences in the level of solitude of a sample of older people of Castellón in function of the sex and of the coexistence, it means, if they live alone or not.

METHOD

Participants:

216 people from Castellón between 55 and 93 years old, with an average age of 68 years and a deviation of 9.16.

Instruments:

Jong Gierveld's loneliness scale.

Procedure:

Bibliographical review
 Analysis – T Test

RESULTS

- Differences by Gender
 $t(204) = -0.402$; $p \leq 0.688 \rightarrow \cancel{\neq}$
- Differences by Coexistence:
 $t(204) = -2.831$; $p \geq 0.005 \rightarrow \equiv$
- Emotional loneliness:
 $t(204) = -6.22$; $p \geq 0.000 \rightarrow \equiv$
- Social loneliness:
 $t(204) = 1.09$; $p \leq 0.277 \rightarrow \cancel{\neq}$

DISCUSSION

Since the results indicate that there are significant differences in the level of loneliness in old age between living alone and not, it has been analyzed if they corresponded to a type of loneliness in particular, from this it has been observed that people who live alone experience a greater sense of emotional loneliness than those that coexist, a fact that is not reflected in social loneliness, which shows no significant differences.

For this reason, a possible line of research would be a longitudinal study with this type of people to establish measures and intervene to minimize this reality that will become increasingly common by the increase of life expectancy.

Bibliografía

Castro, M. P. (2010). Soledad y envejecimiento: Cómo evitar que este binomio se cumpla. En Hartu-Emanak, *La autonomía personal y la dependencia en el proceso de envejecimiento* (X Jornadas), pp. 33-45. Bilbao (ISBN: 978-84-613-8155-5).

Davey, J., Nana, G., de Joux, V. & Arcus, M. (2004). *Accommodation options for older people in Aotearoa/New Zealand*. Wellington, New Zealand: NZ Institute for Research on Ageing/ Business & Economic Research Ltd, for Centre for Housing Research Aotearoa/New Zealand.

De Jong Gierveld, J. & Raadschelders, J. (1982). Types of loneliness. En L. A. Peplau y D. Perlman (Eds.), *Loneliness: A sourcebook of current theory, research and therapy*, (pp. 105-120). Nueva York: John Wiley and Sons.

Del Barrio, É., Castejón, P., et al. (2010). La soledad de las personas mayores en España y Suecia: contexto y cultura. *Revista Española de Geriatría y Gerontología*. 45(4), 189–195.

Holt-Lunstad, J., Smith, T. B., Baker, M., Harris, T., & Stephenson, D. (2015). Loneliness and social isolation as risk factors for mortality: a meta-analytic review. *Perspectives on psychological science*, 10(2), 227-237.

Koc, Z. (2012). Determination of older people's level of loneliness. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 21, 3037-3046. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2702.2012.04277.

Lunaigh, C. O. & Lawlor, B. A. (2008). Loneliness and the health of older people. *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*, 23, 1213-1221. doi: 10.1002/gps.2054.

Neri, A. L. (2014). *Palavras-chave em Gerontologia* (4ª ed.). Campinas, Brasil: Alínea Editora.

OMS. Organización Mundial de la Salud (2015). *Informe mundial sobre el envejecimiento y la salud*. Recuperado de: http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/186466/1/9789240694873_spa.pdf

Pinazo, S. & Bellegarde, M. (2018). *La Soledad en las personas mayores*. Valencia (España), Fundación Pilares.

United Nations (2017). *World Population Prospects. Key findings y advance tables. 2017 revision*. United Nations: New York. Recuperado de: <https://population.un.org/wpp/>