



4th International Conference on Psychology and Mental Health

Bangkok, Thailand November 14-15, 2024

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ABSTRACT RESEARCH TOPIC: The State of Loneliness and Social Isolation in Africa, Current Knowledge and Future Directions.

Loneliness and social isolation are emerging concerns worldwide, yet their understanding within the context of Africa remains limited. This paper presents a comprehensive review of the current state of research on loneliness and social isolation in Africa, encompassing cultural perspectives and societal determinants. Drawing upon diverse disciplinary approaches, including psychology, sociology, public health and anthropology, this review synthesizes existing knowledge to explain the unique challenges and manifestations of loneliness across the continent.

Furthermore, it examines the role of cultural norms, urbanization, migration, and socioeconomic factors in shaping experiences of loneliness and social isolation among diverse African populations - Kenya and East Africa. Building upon this foundation, the paper outlines key avenues for future research, including the development of culturally sensitive assessment tools, community-based interventions, and policy frameworks tailored to the African context. By fostering interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration, this research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of loneliness and social isolation in Africa, ultimately informing evidence-based strategies to promote social connectedness and mental well-being across the continent.

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