

Loneliness in COVID-19 Pandemic Among Adults Impacted by Developmental Disabilities

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BACKGROUND:

- Loneliness has been correlated with depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation and behavior (Ernst et al., 2022; McClelland et al., 2020).
- Individuals with Developmental Disabilities (DD) may experience more feelings of loneliness (Ailey et al., 2006; Hymas et al., 2022).
- Parents of children with DD experience high levels of depression, stress and caregiver burden (Miodrag & Hodapp, 2010).
- However, little information is known about the experience of loneliness in adults impacted by DD in the context of COVID-19 pandemic.

STUDY AIM:

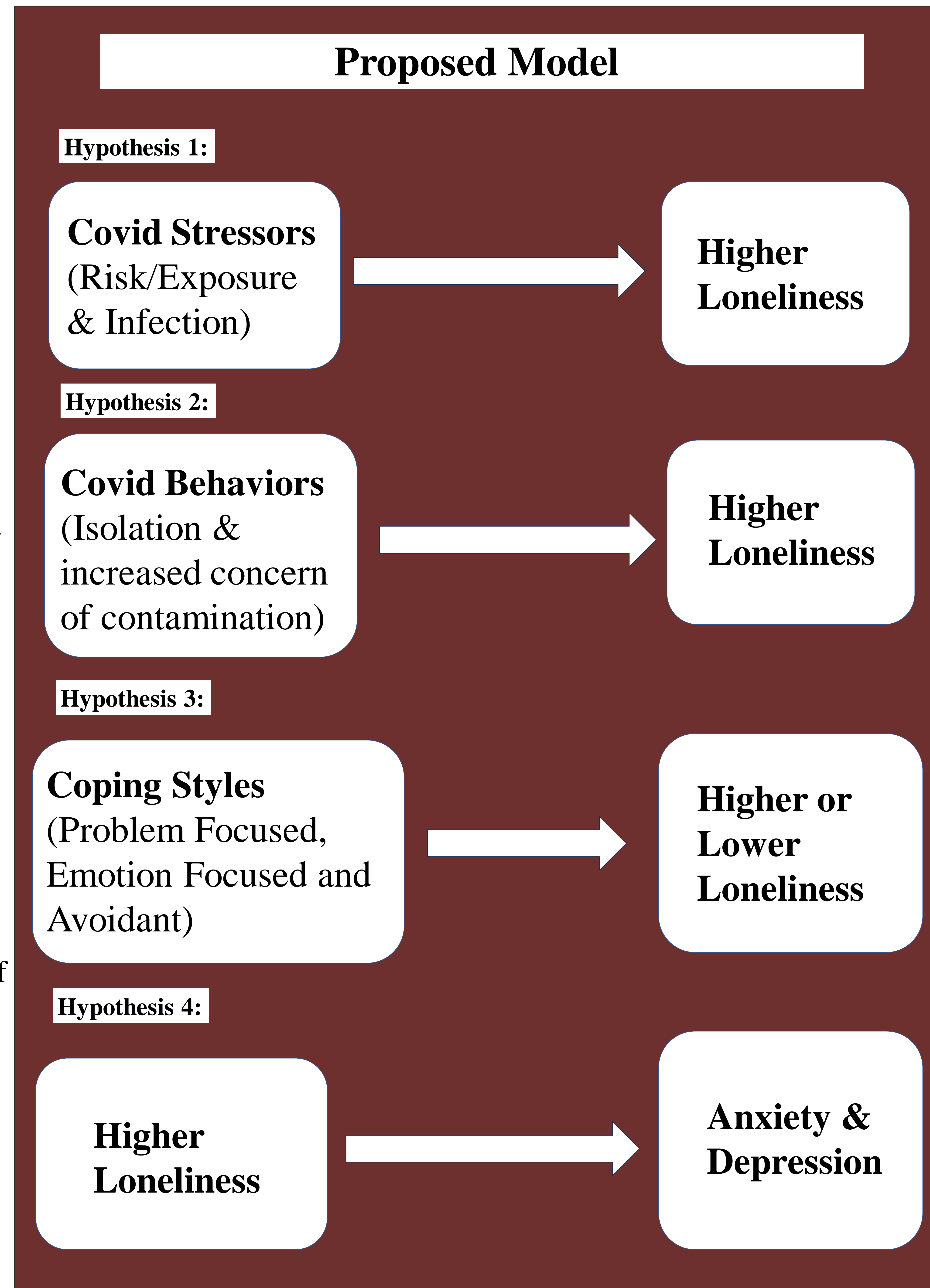
- To examine loneliness in adults impacted by DD during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Examining the relationships between loneliness, pandemic stress, coping styles, anxiety, and depression.

HYPOTHESES:

- **Hypothesis 1:** Covid stressors (risk/exposure, infection) will predict higher loneliness.
- **Hypothesis 2:** Engaging in covid related behaviors (isolation, increased concern of contamination) will predict higher levels of loneliness.
- **Hypothesis 3:** Problem focused coping and avoidant coping styles will predict higher or lower levels of loneliness.
- **Hypothesis 4:** Higher levels of loneliness will predict higher levels of anxiety and depression.

METHODS:

- Cross-sectional data from a larger web-based parent and self-report survey.
- Data collected over a 13-week period from April 2020 to July 2020.



PARTICIPANTS:

- Total 106 participants, 65 parents of children with DD (**PCwDD**) and 41 adults with DD (**AwDD**)
- **PCwDD** ($M_{age} = 46.5$, $SD = 9.51$, 88% F) DD reported: ASD ($n=41$), ADHD ($n=26$), LD ($n=16$), and Down syndrome ($n=8$), 53% reporting multiple DD
- **AwDD** ($M_{age} = 28.18$, $SD = 10.94$, 64% F) DD reported; ASD ($n = 20$), ADHD ($n = 15$), LD ($n = 8$), 44% reporting multiple DD

MEASURES:

- **Anxiety:** GAD-7
- **Coping:** Brief COPE & Brief Resilient Coping Scale
- **COVID-19 Questionnaire**
- **Depression:** PHQ-2
- **Loneliness:** UCLA Loneliness Scale
- **Stress:** PSS-10

PLANNED ANALYSES:

- We plan to run a series of regressions and correlations.

IMPLICATIONS:

- This study will provide insight on how the pandemic affected these individuals and further provide recommendations on how to prevent loneliness if a similar situation would arise again.

Questions? Email:
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References:

