

A sex-sensitive study proposal to identify early *Social Isolation* profiles in young adulthood for lifespan dementia prevention

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Social isolation is a modifiable risk factor for **Alzheimer's disease** (AD), yet prevention efforts remain concentrated in **older age**. Increasing evidence indicates that **social disconnection earlier in life** may initiate **long-term trajectories** of **emotional, motivational**, and **cognitive vulnerability**, with **differential effects by sex**. Young adulthood constitutes a **critical** but understudied period for the **early** identification of **psychosocial risk factors** relevant to **dementia prevention**. This study proposes to examine **sex-specific patterns** of **social isolation** and **perceived loneliness** in **young adults** and their associations with emotional well-being and functional outcomes, with the goal of informing early, lifespan-oriented dementia prevention strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Social Isolation is defined as the **objective situation of having few contacts with other people**, whether family or friends; whereas **Loneliness** is the **subjective feeling** of having **less affection and closeness than desired** in the intimate or relational sphere, and of experiencing little proximity to family or friends (Donovan, N. & Blazer, D., 2020).

The aim is to report the **existence of associations** between **levels of social isolation**, the **subjective experience of loneliness**, and **variables linked to physical and emotional well-being** (a comprehensive state of health encompassing both the absence of illness and the presence of positive psychological resources) with academic performance in psychology students. Additionally, the study seeks to establish a **quantitative baseline** that allows for identifying the extent to which these factors could serve as **predictors of academic performance**, generating useful information for future student support interventions.

METHODS

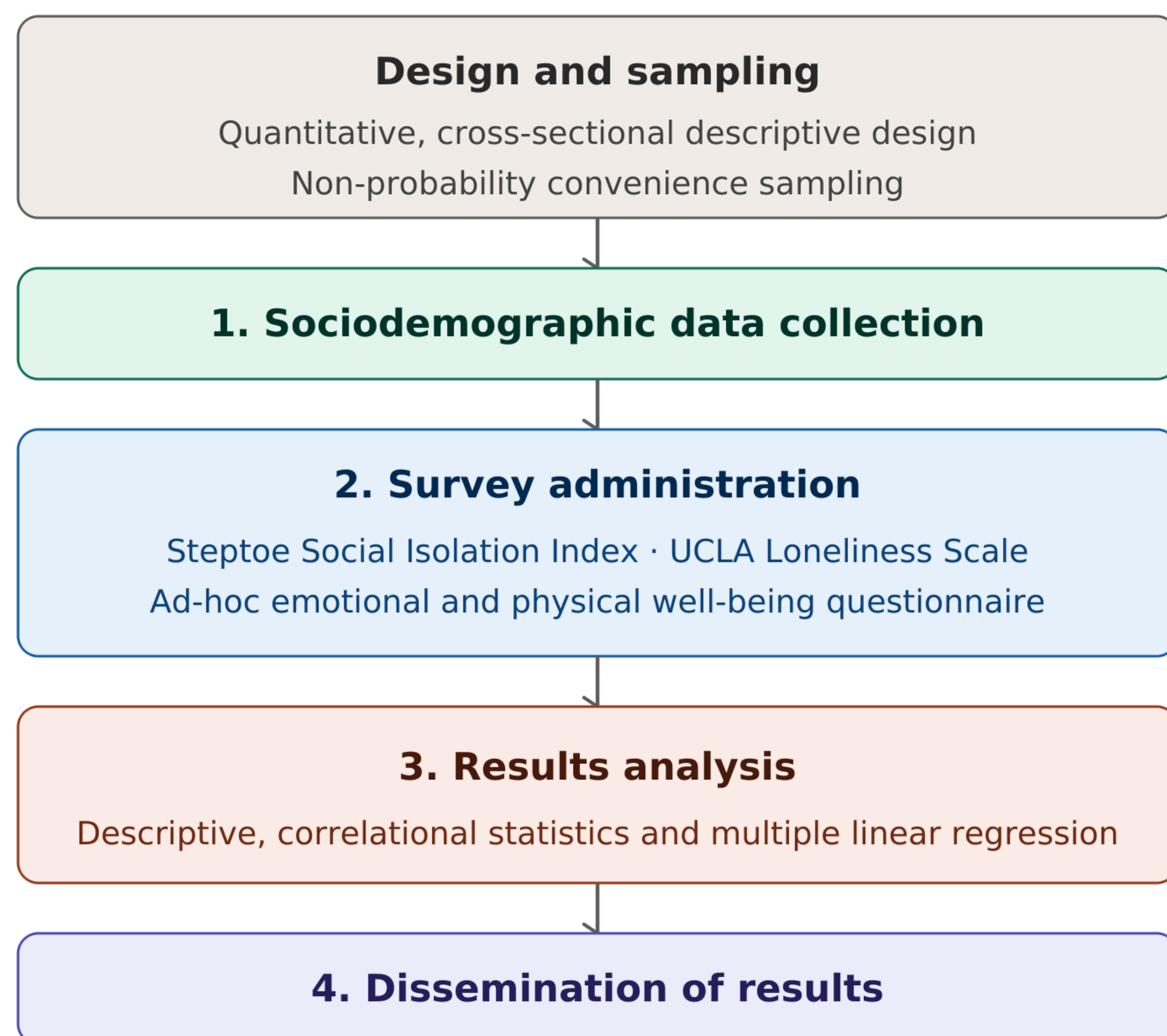


Figure 1:Flowchart. Source: Authors' own elaboration.



Source: AI image, Magic Media Canva (2026)

EXPECTED RESULTS

Both **positive and negative correlations** are expected, along with the **influence of each variable** on the phenomenon under study. These preliminary results will allow for an evaluation of the **appropriateness of the instruments used** and their **discriminant capacity** within this population. Likewise, the findings will help guide **item selection and adaptation** in the subsequent psychometric validation process, optimizing the precision and brevity of the scales.

CONCLUSIONS

This pilot study is expected to provide an **initial empirical understanding** of how social isolation, loneliness, and well-being relate to academic performance among Psychology students. By establishing a **quantitative baseline**, the findings will help determine the extent to which these factors may serve as **predictors of academic outcomes**, offering a foundation for the **development of evidence-based student support programs**. Future research extending this approach to other degree programs will be needed to validate these findings and inform broader institutional interventions.

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