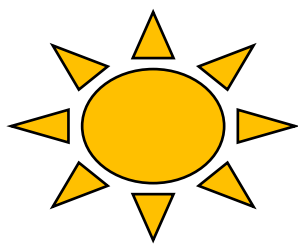


BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

- Older adults experiencing homelessness (OAEH) are the fastest growing unhoused demographic in the U.S.
- They are the most likely to fall back into homelessness after being housed (USHUD, 2024; NAEH, 2025).
- Previous research has shown OAEH experience **mild cognitive impairment and dementia** at higher rates than their housed counterparts.
- Little is known about the correlation between loneliness and cognitive impairment in OAEH.



In 2024, older adults comprised over 25% of the total unhoused population in the U.S.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

RQ1

Is there a significant relationship between cognitive impairment and loneliness in OAEH?

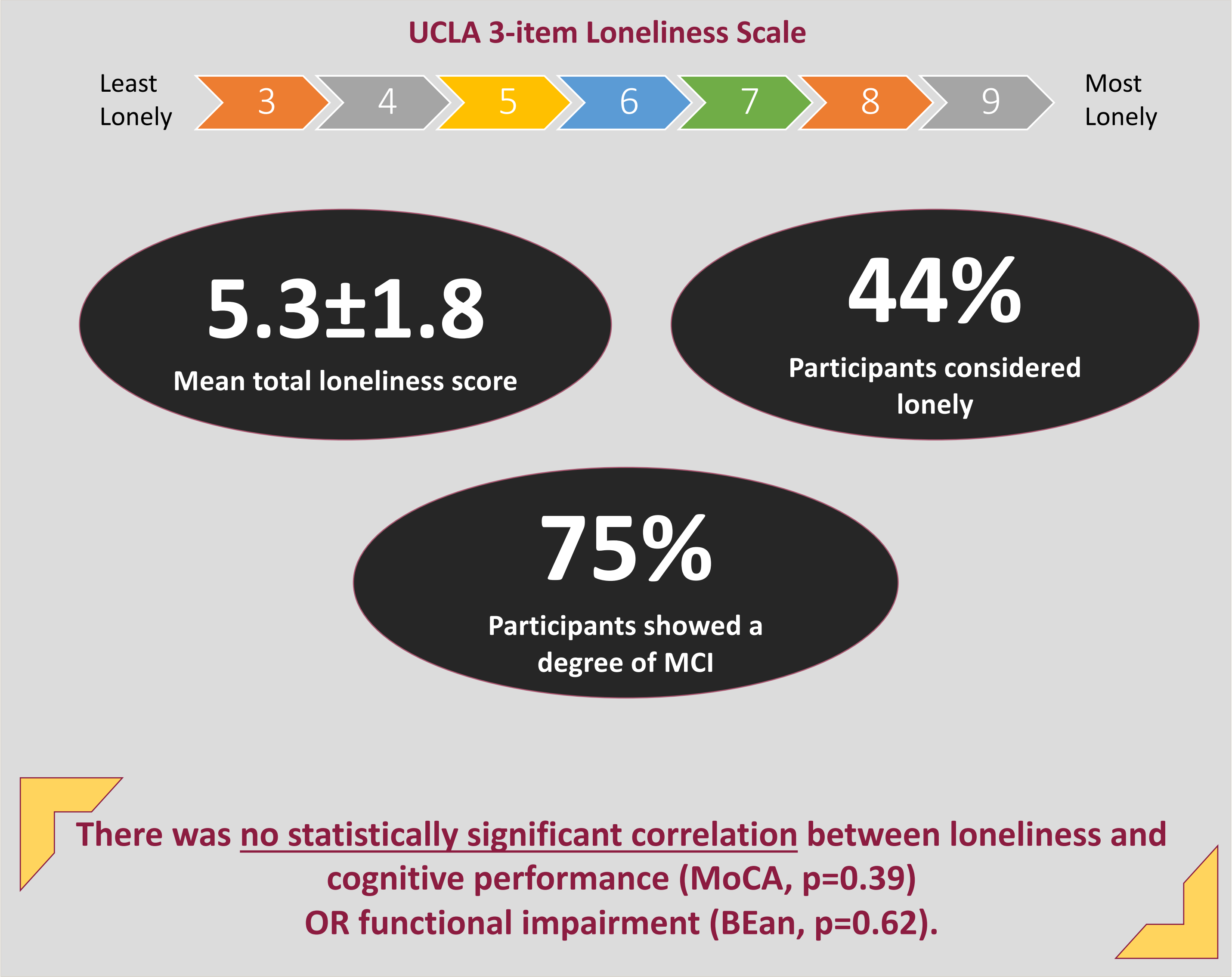
RQ2

Is there a significant relationship between loneliness and functional impairment in OAEH?

CONCLUSIONS

- There was no significant correlation between loneliness and cognitive or functional impairment in this sample of OAEH.
- Research must be conducted to show that this trend remains true in a larger sample between loneliness and cognitive/functional impairment.

FINDINGS



REFERENCES



METHODS

- Screening Instruments:**
- Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA)
 - BEan Test – Functional Assessment
 - UCLA 3-item Loneliness Scale
- Study was conducted at the only older adult emergency homeless shelter in the U.S.
- Participants:**
- 52 unhoused older adults aged 55+ staying in a non-congregate shelter.
- Age: 63.3±5.6 years;
 - Years of Education: 12.9±2.3
 - 32 identifying as males; 20 identifying as females
- Analysis:**
- Separate generalized linear mixed models with gamma distribution to control for age, sex, and education.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

- For shelter staff:**
- Loneliness and cognitive/functional impairment exist at disproportionate rates in OAEH.
 - Shelters should consider regularly screening for these conditions to improve support services.
- For researchers:**
- Future research should incorporate mixed-methods assessments to better understand how older adults experience loneliness and cognitive/functional impairment.
- For policy:**
- Policy must account for the loss of social capital associated with loneliness and cognitive/functional impairment as they greatly impact successful exit of homelessness.