

# How Universal Is a Construct of Loneliness ? Measurement Invariance of the UCLA Loneliness Scale in Indonesia , Germany , and the United States

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## Abstract

The UCLA Loneliness Scale (ULS-20) and its short version (ULS-8) are widely used to measure loneliness. However, the question remains whether or not previous studies using the scale to measure loneliness are measuring the construct equally across countries. The present study examined the measurement invariance (MI) of both scales in Germany, Indonesia, and the United States (N = 2350). The one-, two-, and three-factor structure of the ULS-20 did not meet the model fit cut-off criteria in the total sample. The ULS-8 met the model fit cut-off criteria and has configural, but not metric invariance because two items unrelated to social isolation were not MI. The final six items (ULS-6) exclusively related to social isolation had complete MI. Participants from the United States scored highest in the ULS-6, followed by participants from Germany and then Indonesia. We conclude that the ULS-6 is an appropriate measure for cross-cultural studies on loneliness.

**Keywords:** loneliness, cross-cultural, confirmatory factor analysis, measurement invariance, UCLA Loneliness Scale, social isolation

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