



Examining America's Treatment of the Elderly in Comparison With Other Cultures

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Research Question:

How are elderly adults treated in the US compared to in other countries/cultures? What effects does stigmatism or support have on their general well-being?

Why is this topic important?

By looking at different cultures, we find what patterns are most beneficial to the elderly populations, and can then work to make improvements.

Comparing the US and China:

Interviews conducted with 150 Chinese elders & 145 American elders

What remained consistent: Both family and friend support are significantly and negatively associated with loneliness and depression across both cultures.

→ **What does this mean?** Despite the difference in cultures, elderly adults need social support to maintain their well-being.

Focus on the US:

24 elderly adults (avg age = 71) were interviewed about loneliness. 38% reported feeling "socially isolated" 32% reported feeling "lonely" Major contributions to loneliness: living further from city's center & living alone → **What does this mean?** Socialization contributes to feelings of isolation and loneliness among older adults. Family support plays a major role.

Opportunity for Change:

There is work to be done. Focusing solely on the United States, it would be beneficial to normalize the idea of respecting elders.

Ways to work toward this:

Begin speaking positively about elderly adults. It has been proven that this has led to better cognitive functioning. Normalize intergenerational households. Simply check in with elderly adults

Focus on China:

Researchers examined the relationship between social support and depression using a national survey. Elderly adults with intergenerational relationships were less likely to show signs of depression. → **What does this mean?** Intergenerational relationships and social support strongly and negatively correlate with symptoms of depression.

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