





## Old Age, Loneliness, and Faith Practices: A Qualitative Research in the Context of Psychosocial Resilience

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### Abstract

The phenomenon of loneliness, which is becoming increasingly widespread on a global scale, emerges as a significant psychosocial problem affecting almost every age group today. While loneliness can sometimes be a conscious choice for individuals (voluntary loneliness), it can also arise from a necessity imposed by circumstances. Loneliness in old age is characterized by a structural and situational necessity rather than a preference. With the weakening of family, kinship, and friendship ties, the elderly individual is secluded from social life, driven into social isolation, and compelled to experience living alone. Particularly following the loss of a spouse, it is observed that this experience of loneliness transforms into an unavoidable reality of life for the elderly. This study aims to examine the everyday religious practices of elderly individuals living alone and to reveal the functionality of the phenomenon of religion as a coping strategy for loneliness. The fieldwork of the research is based on in-depth interviews conducted with 30 participants living alone in the city center and villages of Isparta. In this study, which adopts a phenomenological design among qualitative research methods, the subjective meanings attributed by the participants to the phenomena of 'religion' and 'loneliness' were explored through face-to-face interviews. In light of the findings obtained, it was determined that the elderly describe loneliness as a difficult process to cope with; and it was concluded that religious practices such as worship and prayer function as a fundamental sanctuary and source of consolation in struggling with this difficulty.

### Keywords

Old Age, Loneliness, Faith Practices, Psychosocial Resilience, Faith-Based Coping

### Citation

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