



The Loneliness of Many?:

***Investigating the Roots of Urban Russian Loneliness
through WVS Data
(final presentation)***

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Why does loneliness matter?

loneliness: predicts more likelihood of

Having carried a weapon in the past year
Justifiability of using government resources,
of stealing,
of bribery,
of avoiding taxes,
of suicide,
of violence against spouse, children, other persons

Also correlates with lack of generalized trust, and very strongly with unhappiness (.316)

Has 'medical' consequences (mental health).

Treated as a medical, or psychological problem. So how can we explain it sociologically?

Sociologists investigate happiness...

So why not loneliness?

Research Questions

- The lonely city, New York and Moscow as “lonely” places
- Theories of relevance: Durkheim, Tönnies, Simmel, Louis Wirth, Individualization
- City relationships as superficial at the same time as chosen, «useful», and liberating

Is loneliness really more prevalent in cities?

What are its determinants?

Are these different determinants than those in non-city samples?

What have I changed?

My scale was not an accurate measure of individualism-collectivism, because it conflated family together with friendship.

I was not interpreting the Tatarstan sample results.

Need to control for religiosity.

Blase' attitude not accurately measured with 'meaning of life' variable.

Theory

- Strangers (facelessness)
- Division of labor (diminished likeness)
- Geographical dispersion, commuting
- Segregation
- Density, Overstimulation (blasé attitude)
- Incidental contact (instrumental facefulness. Being „used.“)
- Urban values (useful for the ambitious, instrumental, thin networks)

Take 1: Urban Values/Intentions

Urban Values

Individualism vs. Collectivism
Instrumental-rational vs.
Intrinsic, intuitive values
careerist vs. family oriented

Less social
behavior

Objective Social Isolation

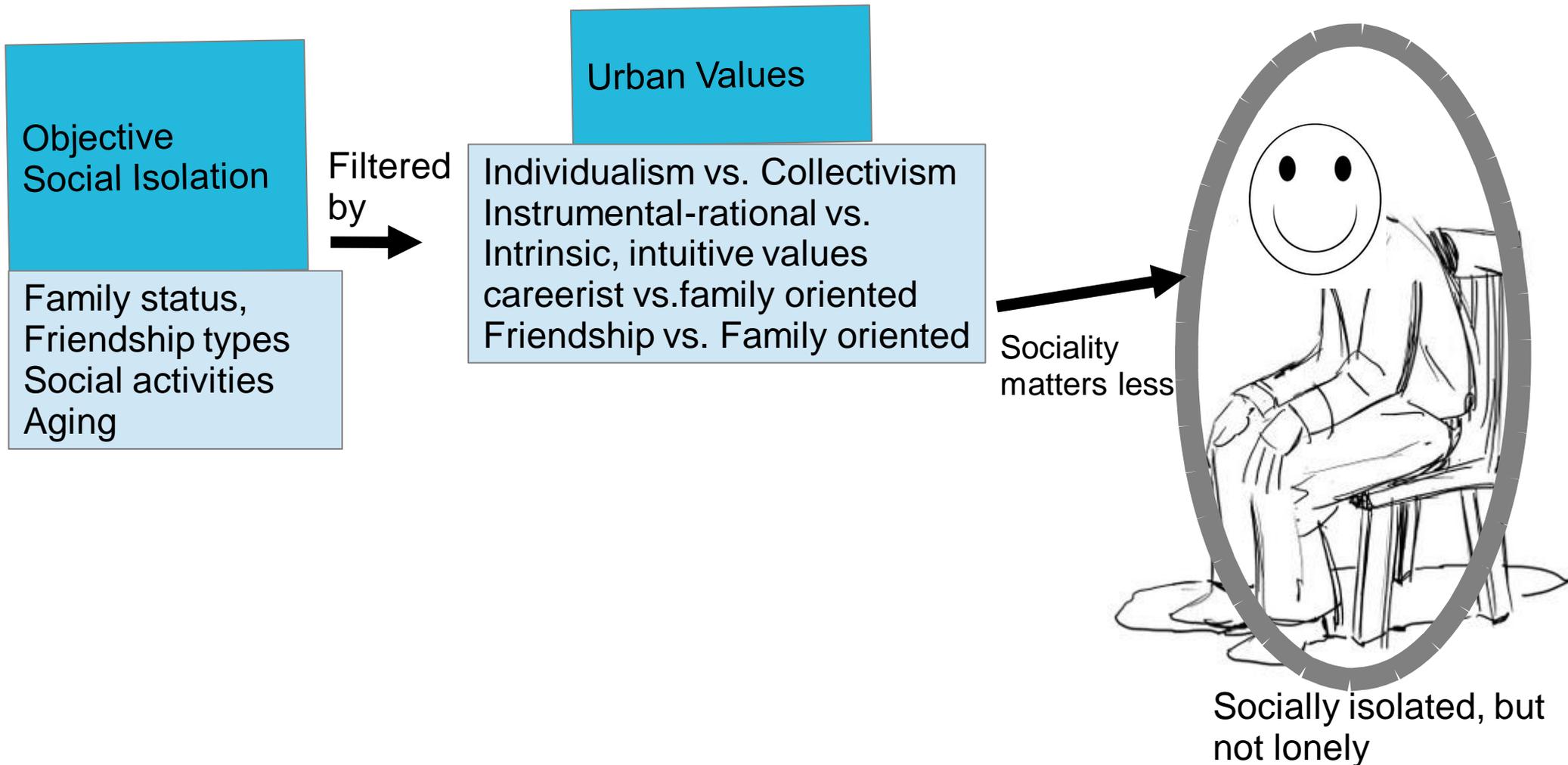
Family status,
Friendship types
Social activities

Aging



Lonely :(

Take 2: Urban Values/Intentions



Hypotheses

- ◆ H1: Urban values should play a role in determining Urban loneliness
- ◆ H2: Non-urban loneliness should depend more upon objective social isolation
- ◆ H3: Individualism should buffer social isolation, so that social isolation does not result in loneliness in urban sample
- ◆ H4: Greater perception of instrumental ties ('being used') should correlate with greater loneliness in cities
- ◆ H5: the small city sample (Tambov) should echo metropolis (Moscow) results on each hypothesis, but to a smaller degree

Analysis

4 Separate OLS Regressions. WVS 2011.
Russian Sample.

1. Moscow, N=1000 (pop ~15 million)
2. Tambov, N=1000 (pop. 280,000)
3. non-urban Russia (settlement size less than 100,000), N=1237
4. Tatarstan, split into city (N=537) and non-city (N=460. less than 100,000)

Dependent Variable: «I often feel lonely». 4 point scale. (completely agree, agree, ...)

Independent Variables

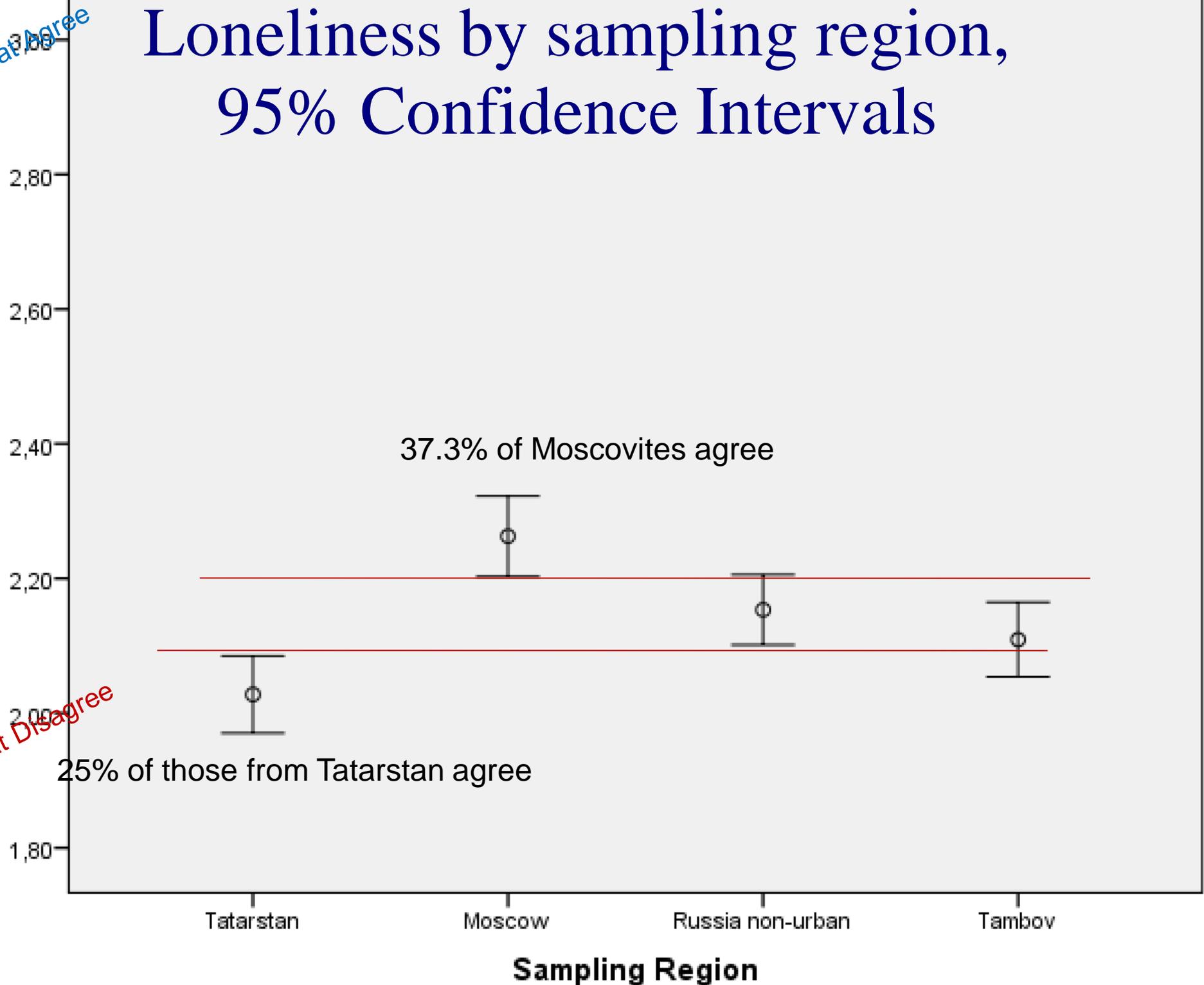
| | |
|------------------|--|
| Urban Values | <p>Individualism: Additive scale (0 to 6) of generalized value of parents, making parents proud, 'Instrumental facefulness'-> perception of being used → low generalized</p> |
| Interactions | <p>(older because of fewer social ties, deaths, isolation), -married/living together status, fewer children</p> |
| Social Isolation | <p>inverted civic engagement: additive scale, involvement in civic organizations: religious, sport/leisure, art/music/education, trade union, political, ecological, professional, humanitarian, consumer protection, self-help, other Immigrant, non-Russian speaking, unemployed Low computer usage Religious 'Otherworldliness'</p> |
| Controls | <p>Sex Income education</p> |

Loneliness by sampling region, 95% Confidence Intervals

Somewhat Agree

Somewhat Disagree

95% confid. interval "I often feel lonely"



37.3% of Moscovites agree

25% of those from Tatarstan agree

Sampling Region

Loneliness by age, 95% Confidence Intervals

Somewhat Disagree

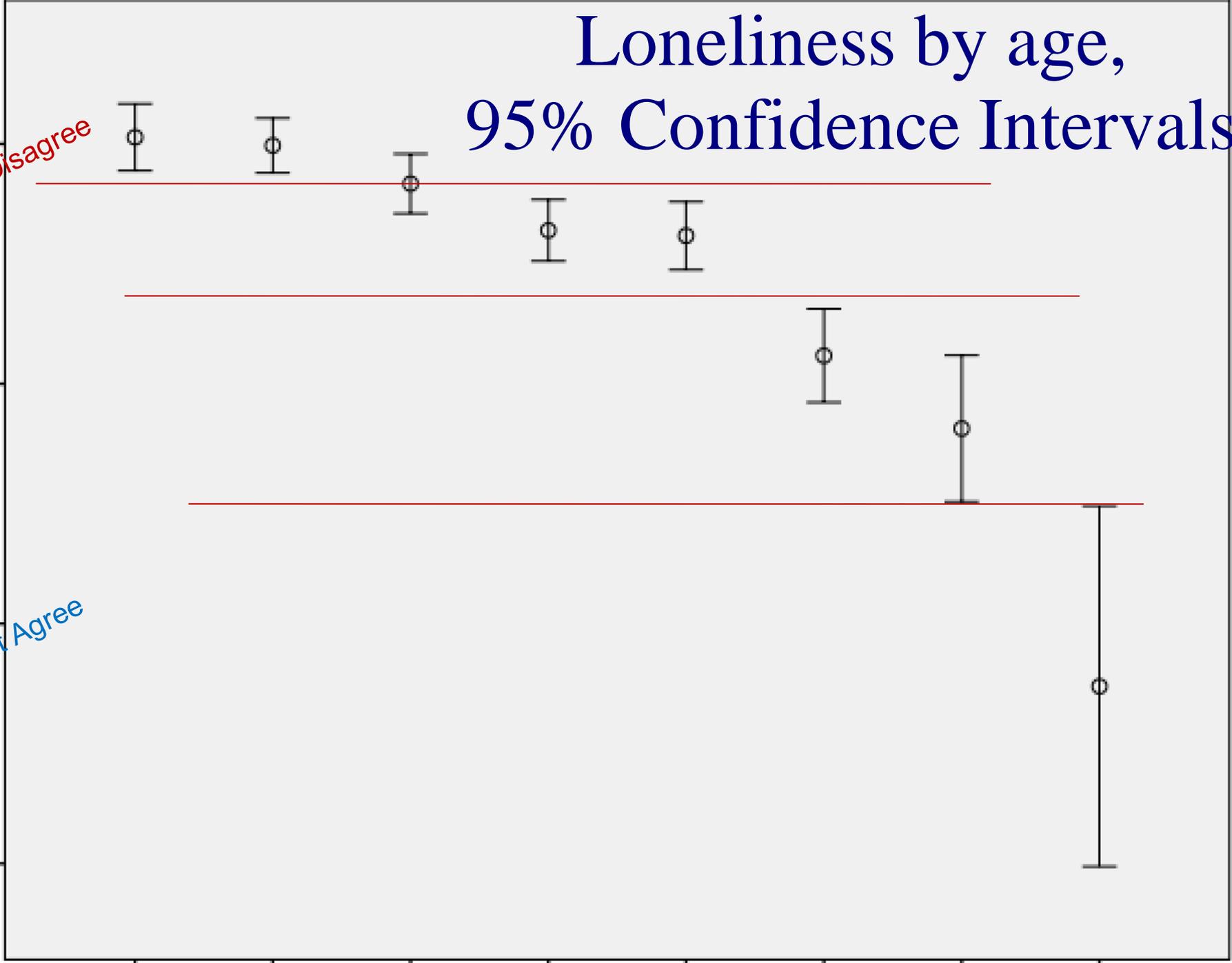
Somewhat Agree

95% confidence interval. "I often feel lonely"

3,0
2,5
2,0
1,5

18-25 26-35 36-45 46-55 56-65 66-75 76-85 86-95

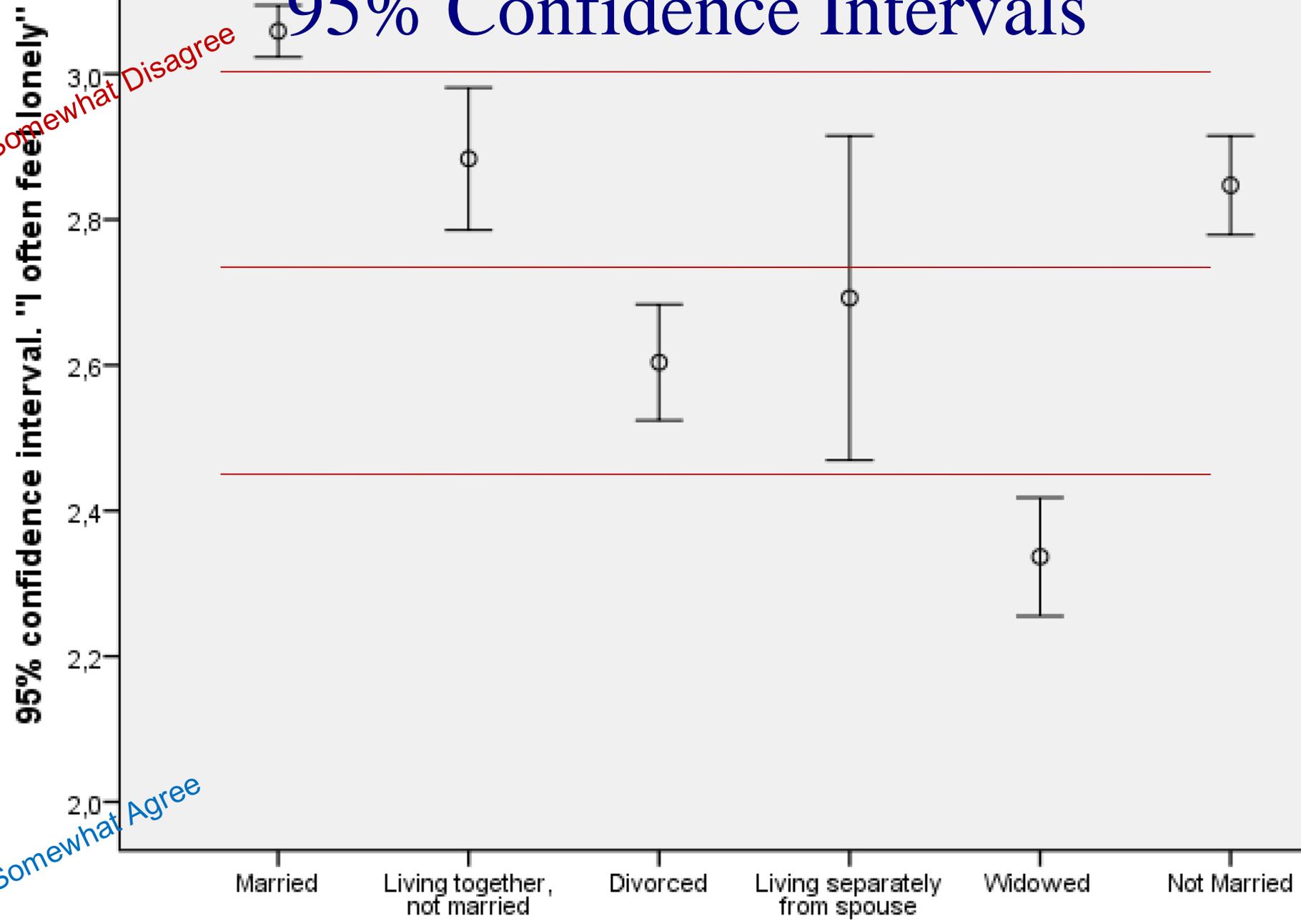
age groups



Loneliness by family situation, 95% Confidence Intervals

Somewhat Disagree

Somewhat Agree



Family situation

Loneliness by sex, 95% Confidence Intervals

Somewhat Disagree

95% confidence interval. "I often feel lonely"

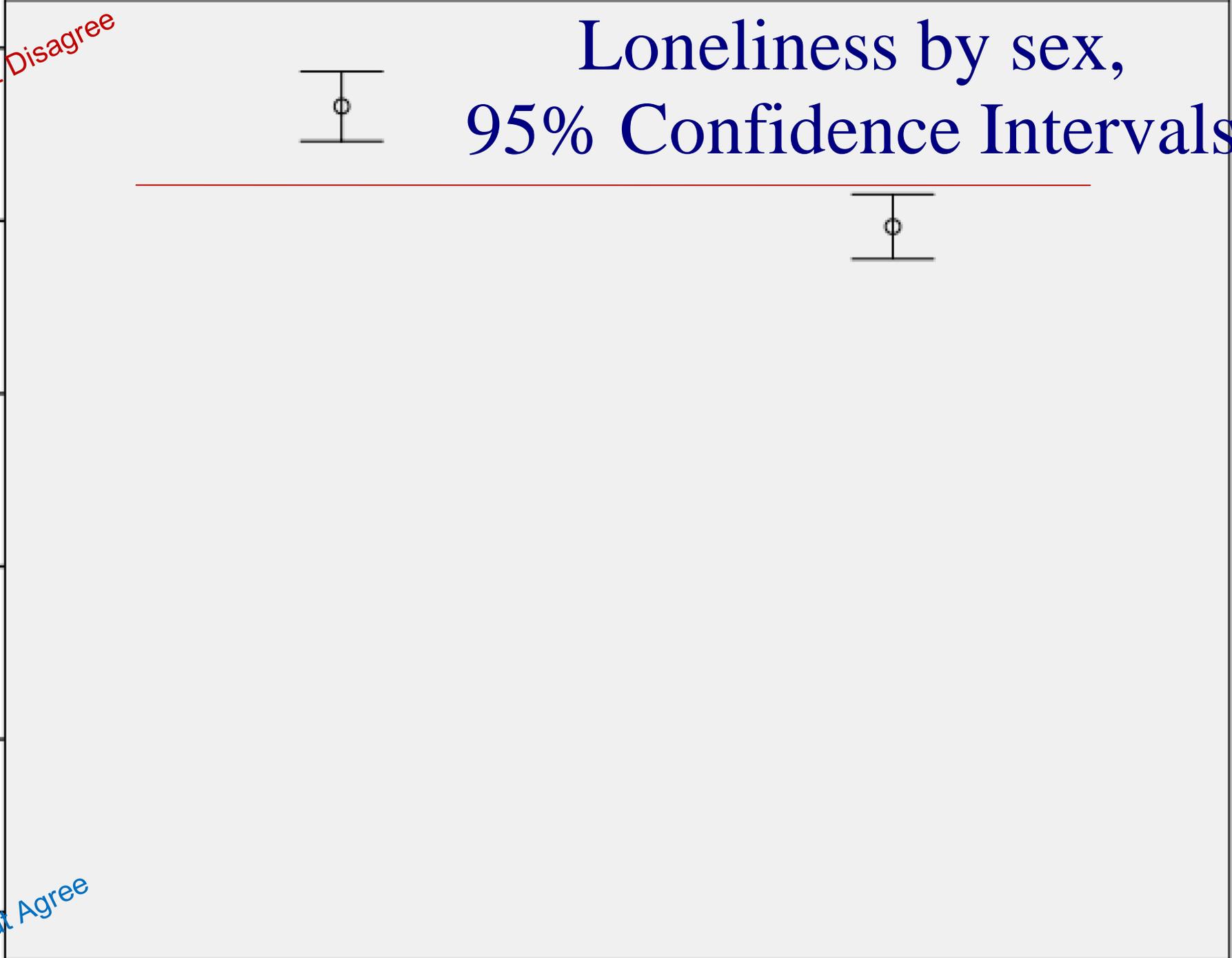
Somewhat Agree

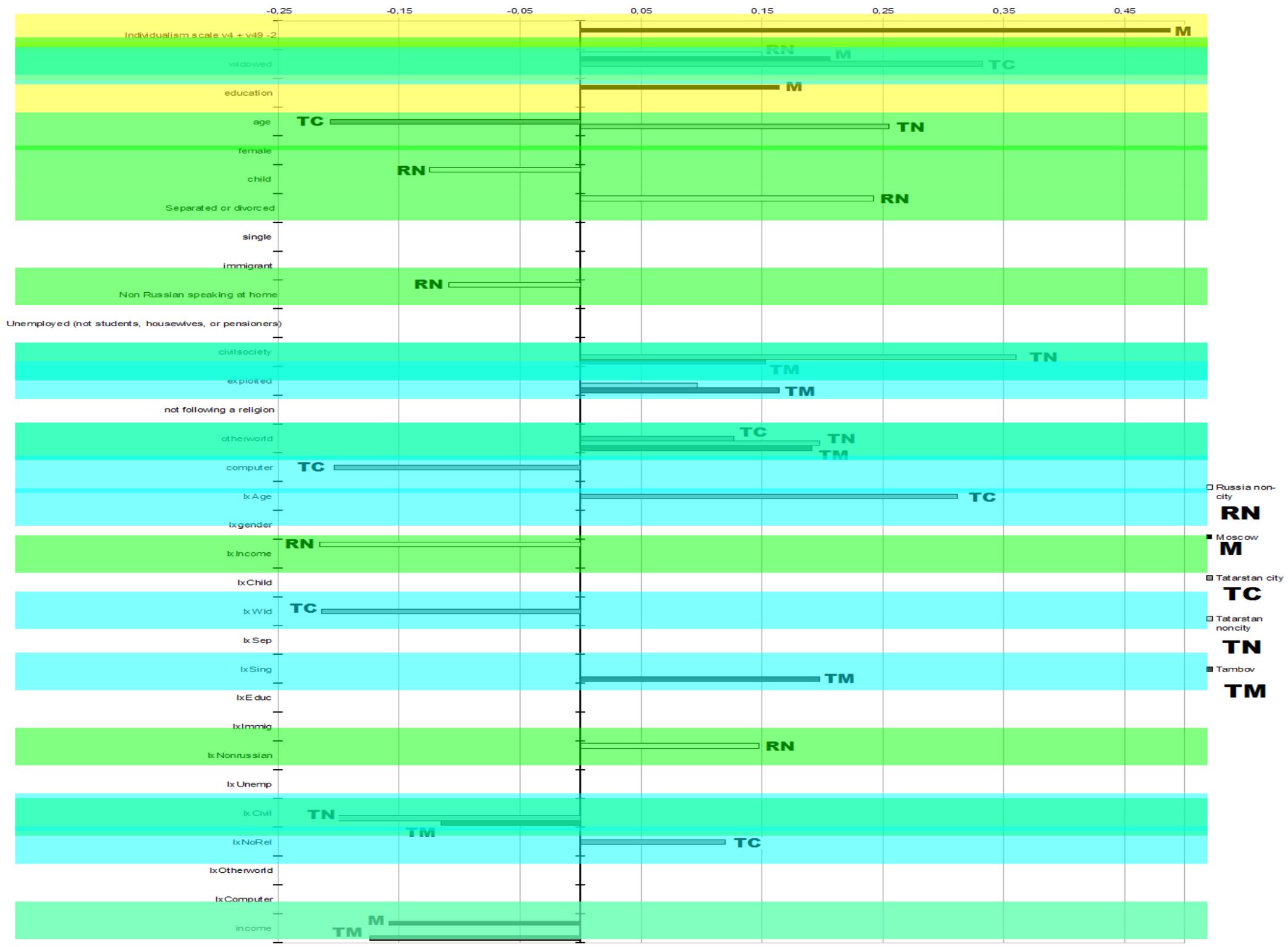
3,0
2,8
2,6
2,4
2,2
2,0

Male

Female

Sex





- Russia non-city
- **RN**
- Moscow
- **M**
- Tatarstan city
- **TC**
- Tatarstan noncity
- **TN**
- Tambov
- **TM**

Conclusions

H1: Values indeed play a role in determining urban loneliness. Overall, this hypothesis is confirmed in that the individualism effect in Moscow is huge. However, other factors also matter in producing loneliness in Moscow.

H2: Non-urban loneliness depends **both** on values and on social isolation. Therefore, this hypothesis should be rejected.

H3: This hypothesis is rejected; individualism produces ambivalent buffer and catalyzing effects on loneliness in cities in Russia.

H4: The perception of being exploited/used does enhance loneliness in Tambov and for non-city Tatars.

H5: This hypothesis should be mostly rejected. Only rarely do smaller cities exhibit similar loneliness effects as Moscow.

Conclusions

Individualism is extremely important for predicting loneliness. (Sociological, not just a psychological phenomenon)

But these Individualism effects are ambivalent. It both enhances and reduces loneliness.

City size matters for explaining these effects. Metropolis, small cities, non city areas have different loneliness determinants and different roles of individualism.

Next Steps

Sharpen framing, add lit review, finish article.

Which framing would be most successful?

... Qualitative pilot interviews begun in New York (soon to be Moscow)..