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Loneliness in Law

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Abstract Summary : Lawyers are ranked as the loneliest profession in a longitudinal survey published in Harvard Business Review in 2018. Loneliness is a response to a mental state which perceived isolation and distressing emotion. The feeling of being alone is an intense, uneasy sense of being “without.” It is subjective and refers to a deficiency in a person’s social relationships in terms of type, quality, or quantity related to a perceived need. Loneliness is distressing because social relationships are necessary; the average individual spends more than 75% of waking hours in the company of other people. The time with others is preferred to time alone. Research indicates the loneliest humans are the young and old, those in poor health, and the highly educated, most notably those in the fields of medicine and law. This paper explores loneliness among law students primarily and discusses how it may impact those within the legal profession, including law students. Specifically, this paper explores: (1) what is loneliness, who is lonely, and how it impacts an individual; (2) present research on well-being and loneliness in the legal profession; and (3) results from a loneliness survey of law students. In Asia, this is the first research to explore loneliness in the legal profession and the first research analyzing results of a survey of law students' loneliness.